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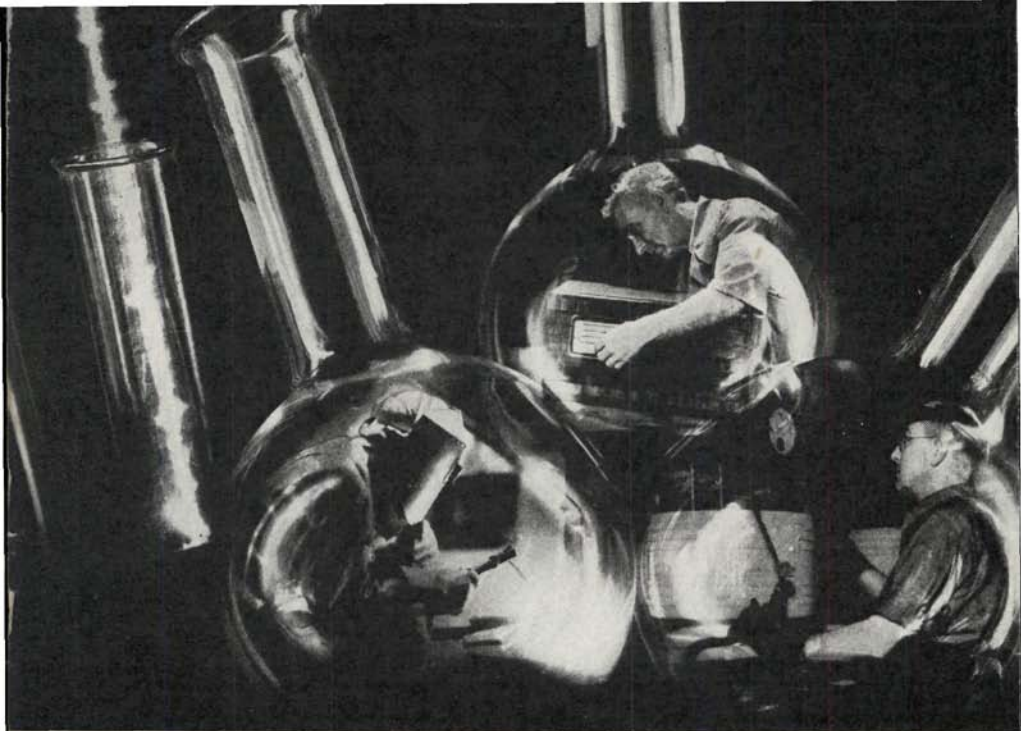
★ April, 1938

The American Mercury



When Is a Murderer?	Albert Jay Nock
Soviet Russia's Wars of Conquest	William H. Chamberlin
The Cure for Alcoholism	John W. Thomason, Jr.
England Liquidates Liberalism	Lawrence Dennis
No Children for Me!	Anonymous
Dixie Debunked	A. D. Moody
Paternity by Proxy	Anthony M. Turano
Horror on the Newsstands	Bruce Henry
Portrait of a New Deal Senator	Jerome Mason
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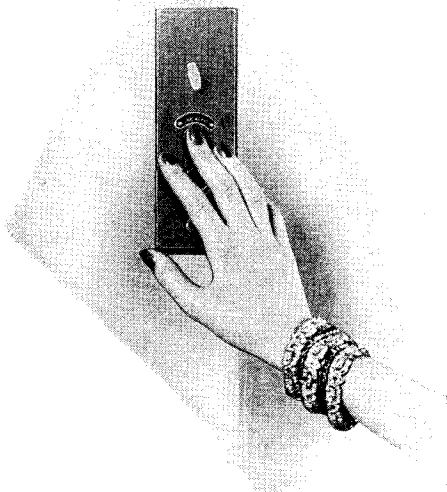


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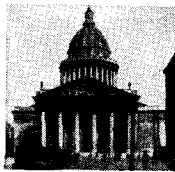
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THE AMERICAN MERCURY

VOLUME
XLIII

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viewpoint. But Mr. Walsh in his turn exhibits an anti-Semitic bias strong enough to delight Nazi Germany, and a devotion to the Roman Church that will gratify the Vatican. An impressive biography; but Pilate's question still applies: What is truth?

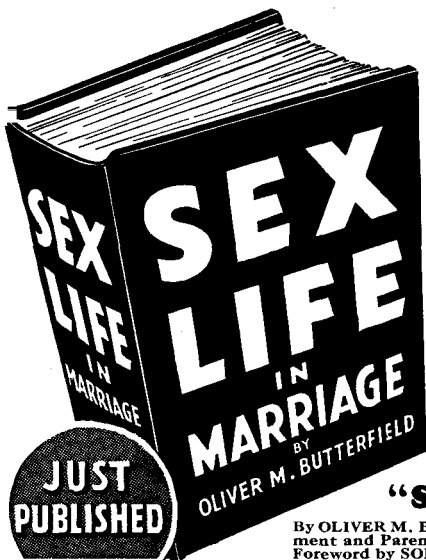
★★ YOUNG CATHERINE, by E. M. Almedingen. \$2.50. *Stokes*. Story of that unconsidered Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst, petty North German *altesse* who became Catherine the Great, Autocrat of All the Russias. The author takes her from her unattractive childhood in a garrison town to the bloom of her womanhood, when Gregory Orlov set her on the throne of the Czars. Romantic biography, but it does not realize the promise offered in the foreword, wherein Miss Almedingen particularizes her source material.

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THE CHECK LIST

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who forty years ago were more concerned with conquest than with tourists. Miss Baum indulges in characters; she runs the range from rajah to peasant; you learn much of Balinese customs, manners, and morals, all in great detail. An entertaining book, and flavored with drama. When the Dutch warships came, they put an end to native idylls.

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The American MERCURY

SOVIET RUSSIA'S WARS OF CONQUEST

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

THE MERCURY dedicates this article to Comrade Litvinov, the peace-loving diplomat who inadvertently admitted his own fraudulence in this recent United Press dispatch:

Geneva.—Maxim Litvinov of Soviet Russia denounced Italy, Germany, and Japan today as aggressor nations and demanded that the League of Nations aid Loyalist Spain and China at once and effectively. His face reddening with anger as he warmed to his speech, the Russian Foreign Commissar shouted:

“Between aggression and non-aggression, between peace and war, there can be no synthesis. Parrots in high places should be told that nonsense repeated day by day does not cease to be nonsense.”

Our readers may be interested in comparing the above nonsense from a high Proletarian Parrot with the following facts.

PROFESSIONAL and amateur friends of the Soviet Union are feverishly busy today in spreading the legend that Joseph Stalin's régime is a mighty bulwark of international peace and goodwill. The Soviet Union, we are assured,

has never fought and will never fight an aggressive war. Its constituent republics, according to the various versions of the Soviet Constitution now in circulation, are all free to secede at a moment's notice without any fear of reprisals.

The peculiar double standard of morals (a softly-indulgent standard for Mother Russia and a damnation-standard for the rest of the world) which governs the thinking of Radicals and "Liberals", has promoted this myth of a peace-loving, peace-preserving Soviet Union. Thus, when one of Hitler's lieutenants not long ago blurted out that Germany prefers cannon to butter, the statement was caught up and repeated everywhere as final proof of the unregenerate nature of the war-mongering Third Reich: but when Stalin compelled the Russian people for many years to dispense not only with butter but with bread itself — in order to push through the militarist industrialization program of the first Five-Year Plan — this was accepted as a highly-commendable piece of national self-discipline. In the same manner, the facts that Russia's intensive arming began years ahead of that of Germany and Japan, and that the military expenditures of the Soviet Union in 1936, totaling some \$3,000,000,000, exceeded those of any other nation on earth, have been conveniently overlooked.

But the ultimate disavowal of Russia's claims to an international good-behavior certificate may be found in an examination of political events since the World War.

The historical records show that the Soviet Government, since its establishment — besides stirring up countless strikes, riots, and general disorders abroad through the instrumentality of its subsidized, affiliated Communist parties — has fought a round dozen *wars of conquest and aggression*, some of which violated in the most cynical way engagements which the Soviet régime had voluntarily assumed and principles to which the Communist Party was pledged. More than one of these wars resulted in larger casualties, both for the Soviet armies and for the forces of the invaded countries, than the Japanese occupation of Manchuria or the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. From the almost-forgotten civil class-war in Finland in 1918 to the somewhat similar Spanish conflict today, the Kremlin has displayed an incorrigible tendency to interfere in disturbances outside its own borders which puts the military adventures of Mussolini to shame.

The Soviet Government has proved itself a past master in every old trick of imperialistic conquest and has added a few original new ones on its own account. A favorite device has been formally to recognize the independence of a State, then to create disorder through Communist agents within the

country in question, and to complete the process by sending in the Red Army to help the local Communist rebels. The creation of "independent" States which are completely controlled from Moscow and the waging of war without declaring it are two other favorite Soviet methods of procedure. But they have never fooled anyone except editors of the *New Republic*.

The Soviet trail of bloody conquest and outright aggression stretches from Finland, in the far northwest of the former Czarist Empire, to the Caucasian States in the southeast, and to the rolling steppes and deserts of Mongolia and Manchuria.

II

One may begin to cite chapter and verse with the violent civil war which broke out in Finland early in the year 1918. The prelude to this civil war was a situation quite similar to that which led to the current conflict in Spain: increasingly bitter class-antagonism, combined with a fairly even division of popular sentiment, so far as may be judged from election returns. The non-Socialist groups in the Finnish Diet, which was elected in the Summer of 1917, had a slight majority and organized a government

headed by Svinhufud. The independence of Finland under this government was formally recognized by the Soviet Government on December 31, 1917.

A few weeks later the Finnish Reds, showing as little respect for parliamentary voting as the Spanish Comrades have displayed more recently, drove the Svinhufud Cabinet from Helsingfors by means of a general strike and an uprising of Red Guards. Despite its previous recognition of Finland's independence, the Soviet Government intervened in the subsequent civil war to the best of its ability, supporting the Red régime with land and naval units. Even after some of these were withdrawn under German diplomatic pressure, aid continued in the form of volunteers and munitions. Ultimately Finland, with help from Germany, rid itself of the invading Red legions from its "peace-loving" neighbor, and settled down to the placid, well-fed existence of a peasant democracy.

During most of 1918 the Soviet Government lacked resources for the forcible spread of its revolutionary doctrines in other countries, because it was occupied in a life-and-death struggle for existence against widespread internal revolts. Toward the end of the year, how-

ever, the victories of the Red Army on the Volga, combined with the collapse of Germany, opened up opportunities for foreign crusading which were seized promptly. Trotsky on October 30, 1918, declared:

Free Latvia, free Poland and Lithuania, free Finland, and on the other side, free Ukraina, will be not a wedge, but a uniting link between Soviet Russia and the future Soviet Germany and Austria-Hungary. This is the beginning of a European Communist federation—a union of the proletarian republics of Europe.

Trotsky's fit of apocalyptic prophecy was soaring high in those days; on another occasion he envisaged a united Soviet Europe as sending forth an invincible armada to conquer the last refuge of capitalism, the United States. While this remained an unrealized fantasy, the Soviet armies did move westward in the Winter of 1918-1919, intent on a self-determining job for the Poles, Letts, and Estonians. This drive for the forcible incorporation of non-Russian peoples into the Soviet Union was most successful—temporarily—in Latvia. Almost all its territory, including the capital, Riga, was occupied by the Soviet invaders. Riga lived through the customary Red régime of short rations and mass executions. The final failure of this

“revolutionary offensive” was attributable not to any belated recognition of the right of the Letts, Estonians, and Poles to settle their own affairs, but to the rise of formidable anti-Bolshevik movements in Russia, under Admiral Kolchak in the East and General Denikine in the South. This made it impossible to spare enough troops and executioners to turn the inhabitants of Russia's former border provinces into loyal, peace-loving Soviet citizens.

The Soviet-Polish War of 1920 was another demonstration of Communist inability to preserve moderation in the moment of military success and to refrain from using the sword as an instrument of conversion to the gospel according to St. Marx. The initial responsibility for this conflict rests mainly with Poland, which broke a prolonged lull on the Soviet-Polish front to advance into the Ukraine, lured by the dream of a federation of non-Russian nationalities under Polish hegemony. The Polish offensive was repulsed, and by July, the Soviet armies were approaching territory that was indisputably Polish by racial composition. Here would have been an excellent opportunity to have halted hostilities on the very favorable terms which Poland was willing to

offer and thereby to give convincing proof that the Soviet Government desired only to defend its own territory.

But Lenin and his associates were sure that revolution was just around the corner in Poland. "We shall break the crust of Polish bourgeois resistance with the bayonets of the Red Army," Lenin orated. Repeated Polish peace overtures were ignored or sabotaged as the future heroes of the American League Against War and Fascism swept forward toward Warsaw, trampling the country under the iron military heel. The Soviet peace terms which were proposed on August 10, when the military outlook was still very favorable to the invading Red Army, amounted virtually to the annexation of Poland as a Soviet State. Not only was the Polish Army to be limited to 50,000 men, but an armed militia was to be created, consisting entirely of urban industrial workers, "under the control of the Labor organizations of Russia, Poland, and Norway". At the same time the Polish war industry was to be demobilized and surplus munitions were to be handed over to Russia and the Ukraine to help them in "peace-loving" operations on other defenseless neighbors.

The attempt to present Sovietism to Poland on the bayonets of the Red Army proved a fiasco. The Polish forces rallied in the very shadow of Warsaw and delivered a smashing counter-attack. The final terms of peace were less favorable than those which the invading Soviet army could have obtained earlier if it had not been obsessed with the idea of Sovietizing Poland.

So Poland, like Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania, had an enlightening experience of the promise, so often voiced by the Communists and duly incorporated in the new Soviet Constitution, that the non-Russian nationalities of the former Czarist Empire enjoy full self-determination, including the right of separation. It is most instructive to recall, in this connection, that not a single national subdivision of pre-war Russia was able to quit its association with Russia under the Soviets peacefully. The right to contract out of the brotherly Union has been effective only when fought for.

III

Before considering Soviet wars of conquest in former Russian territory, two points should be noted.

First, pre-war Russia was a patchwork of nationalities, many of which were imperfectly reconciled to Russian rule. Even after Poland and the Baltic States acquired independence, Russians constituted only a little more than half the population of the Soviet Union. Somewhat over one-fifth consisted of Ukrainians, living in the fertile southern provinces of European Russia (the Ukrainian language is so different from the Russian that special courses of instruction are necessary for Russian Communists who occupy permanent posts in the Ukrainian Administration). The remainder of the population is divided among scores of nationalities, ranging from peoples with ancient histories and a clear sense of nationhood, such as Georgians and Armenians, to primitive aborigines. Second, the Communist Party, under Lenin's leadership, repeatedly pronounced itself in favor of the most sweeping national self-determination.

It is in the light of this latter professed principle that one must judge the military operations of the rapacious Soviet armies in non-Russian parts of the former Russian Empire. The largest of these non-Russian regions was the Ukraine. Even before the Bolsheviki seized power in Petrograd and Moscow,

a strong Nationalist movement, the product of racial discrimination and oppression, had manifested itself there. At the time the Soviet régime was established in Northern and Central Russia, an Ukrainian Nationalist government was set up in Kiev. While it was very difficult in those turbulent days to hold plebiscites, the majority of the peasants, much the largest class in the population, favored a Nationalist government, rather than rule by Russians, whether Red or White. The best proof of this was the active guerrilla war which these peasants carried on for years both against the Communist dictatorship and against the restorationist efforts of Denikine, who occupied the Ukraine for a time in 1919.

No Soviet régime would have stood a chance in the Ukraine if that country had been left to itself. Yet three times it was overrun and conquered by "peace-loving" Soviet troops. The Red government in the Ukraine was one of constant and pitiless terror, largely directed against the Nationalists who were trying to assert their "constitutional" right of self-determination. The records of the Cheka (the original name of the political police which was subsequently renamed the OGPU) show that during the

year 1920, executions took 3879 lives in the Ukraine. How many thousands more there were, no one will ever know.

Two decades of Soviet dictatorship have not banished the anxiety of the rulers in the Kremlin as regards the loyalty of the Ukraine. Here, more than anywhere else, purges of the Communist Party are merciless; and officials who are suspected of the faintest traces of Nationalist feeling are summarily removed. One of the oldest Ukrainian Communist leaders, Skripnik, committed suicide in 1933 as a result of the persecution to which he was subjected by Stalin's personal agents.

The constant accusations today that this, that, or the other group of proscribed Soviet citizens has plotted to hand over the Ukraine to Germany are ridiculous from a factual standpoint. But they reflect the concern of Stalin and his associates as to how the Ukraine would act if a large war should break out. The terrible famine of 1932-1933, when millions of Ukrainian peasants were left to starve while the Soviet Government was selling grain abroad, has hardly been a cementing force for loyalty.

Georgia is another nationalist entity within the Soviet Union where self-determination received

a peculiar interpretation. This mountainous, picturesque, little country on the southern side of the main Caucasus range has its old distinctive language and culture. It formally seceded from Russia in 1918, when the Bolsheviki were too concerned with nearer fronts of civil war to pay much attention to what was happening in the remote Caucasus. It set up a Nationalist government, in which Georgian moderate Socialists played a leading part.

In the Spring of 1920, the Soviet Government concluded a treaty with Georgia, explicitly recognizing its existence as a separate State. But in February, 1921, without provocation, Soviet troops entered Georgia from the north and the east, while the Turks, acting in understanding, invaded the little country from the south. Faced by overwhelmingly superior forces, Georgia was overrun and conquered by the same remorseless power which is vaunted today as the champion of international good-will by American "Liberal" apologists.

The Cheka, after the Soviet invasion and conquest, set out to liquidate every Georgian Nationalist. In 1924 an uprising broke out in the Chiatouri region of Georgia; Georgian Soviet officials

themselves admitted that its suppression was attended by hundreds of executions. Only recently, twenty people, accused of plotting against Stalin's dictatorship, were shot in Tiflis. Unless one fully subscribes to the double standard of morals for Russia, it is uncommonly difficult to recognize any distinction between the conquest of Georgia and the more recent acquisitions of Manchuria and Ethiopia.

Adjoining Georgia to the north-east is the craggy land of Daghestan, inhabited by an extraordinary variety of Oriental tribes, speaking many different languages, but united by Islamic faith. Daghestan had always been a tough nut for Russian military power to crack. Its great national leader, Shamil, led an amazingly long resistance to the Russian occupation in the middle of the nineteenth century; the hero of Tolstoy's story, Hadji Murat, was an historical figure in Daghestan. So the mountaineers of this long strip of rugged Caspian seacoast and hinterland were only acting naturally when they displayed equal aversion to White and Red brands of Russian rule. An insurrection in Daghestan was a factor in bringing about the defeat of General Denikine. When Soviet troops occupied the country in the Spring of 1920, their violent requi-

sitions and outrages to the religious feelings of the people soon provoked another insurrection. If the Daghestan mountaineers had only been Moroccans fighting France or Spain, or Pathans taking pot-shots at the British, or Ethiopians on the warpath against Italy, their exploits would have been glorified by all the proletarian editors, authors, and rhymesters of New York. But they had the bad taste to object to Soviet rule. So that, instead of being recipients of sympathy and funds from a "Committee in Defense of Daghestan Democracy", the unfortunate inhabitants received only a merciless punitive expedition which reduced Daghestan to subjection, after 5000 Russian soldiers lost their lives. The casualties among the rebel mountaineers were probably much greater; more than one rocky *aul*, or mountain village, was the scene of an unchronicled "Massacre of Guernica".

Self-determination also received rough Soviet treatment in the picturesque regions of desert and legendary towns, such as Bokhara and Samarkand, which lie beyond the Caspian Sea. Mikhail Frunze, commander of the Soviet forces in Central Asia, on August 25, 1920, issued an order to the Red Army to "co-operate" with the Bokharan

revolutionaries. The purpose of this military activity was described as "revolutionary fraternal help to the Bokharan people in its struggle with the despotism of the Bokharan autocrat". This struggle existed chiefly in the revolutionary imagination of Comrade Frunze; and what occurred was an old-fashioned imperialistic invasion of the ancient Emirate of Bokhara. The city of Bokhara was stormed after three days of fighting by the peace-loving Red Army.

The conquest of Bokhara was followed by a protracted period of colonial warfare in this part of Asia. Except for revolutionary slogans, there was no difference between the campaigns to reduce this part of Asia to complete subjection and the expeditions against recalcitrant "natives" which are such a familiar feature of the history of imperialism. The help which was received from Central Asians who sympathized with the Soviet régime was very slight, less than that which the Italians obtained from native auxiliaries in their Ethiopian campaign. Russian troops were always used in the more important operations. It would be pretty hard — even for a Mike Gold or a Heywood Broun — to describe these wars of conquest as "defense of Russian soil

against Fascist aggression" — particularly as the "defense" took place in foreign territory some 3000 miles from Moscow.

In the Far East, the Soviet Government has three times embarked on military operations outside its own frontiers which would have evoked the most violent denunciations of Stalin's kept press and of "Liberals" abroad if they had been undertaken by any other power. The first of these forays was in 1921, when Red troops, on the pretext of driving back the raids of the White guerilla leader, Baron Ungern-Sternberg, marched into Urga, capital of Outer Mongolia, and stayed there — until the Mongols of that vast land of steppes had been properly "self-determined".

Although the Soviet Government has never formally annexed Outer Mongolia, and this territory is still theoretically a part of China, no Chinese official, indeed no foreign visitor of any nationality, except for all-powerful Soviet military and civilian "advisers", has been permitted to set foot in it for many years. Outer Mongolia is as completely a puppet State of the Soviet Union as Manchoukuo is a dependency of Japan. That this Soviet enterprise in land-grabbing has received so much less attention than its Japanese counterpart is at-

tributable partly to the working of the familiar double standard of morals, partly to the complete exclusion of foreign witnesses from this exhibit of Soviet imperialism, partly to the lesser importance of Outer Mongolia, by contrast with Manchoukuo, as regards population and resources.

Still another occasion when Soviet troops were mustered for service outside the Soviet Union is an equally delicious commentary on the sincerity of Soviet anti-imperialism. It provides convincing proof that the Soviet régime, always ready through its propagandists to urge "oppressed" peoples to seize the "imperialistic" property of other powers, is most ready to defend its own possessions on foreign soil by the most unregenerate means. The occasion was the Summer of 1929, when the Chinese Government, bringing allegations of Communist propaganda against the Soviet employees of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which bisects the northern part of Manchuria and was operated on a basis of mixed Sino-Soviet management, took over administration of the road. Now the Chinese Eastern Railway, built across Chinese territory with the aid of Russian and other foreign capital before the World War, was just the type of

enterprise which Lenin and other Communist theoreticians had always denounced as imperialist exploitation. The Soviet propagandists who flooded China during the high tide of the Left-Wing Nationalist movement in 1926 and 1927 had been constantly urging the Chinese to "reclaim", by the most forceful means available, all such foreign concessions.

The events of 1929, however, showed that it makes a good deal of difference whose railway is seized. The Soviet Government did not, as some of its more naïve foreign admirers might have expected, give back the railway to the Chinese with apologies for having inadvertently held it so long. On the contrary, it did precisely what it had always, with holier-than-thou self-righteousness, denounced "imperialistic" powers for doing: it resorted to armed force. Large Soviet forces were massed at each end of the railway and after preliminary skirmishing, Manchuria was invaded, Soviet troops in the western part of the country advancing as far as Hailar. The Chinese, as usual, proved unable to stand up to troops with modern equipment. If one might parody the style which *Pravda* would have employed if another country had been involved, "imperialism was re-established in

its rights after thousands of innocent Chinese workers and peasants were slaughtered". Incidentally, this Soviet war with China, which, in the best modern fashion, was undeclared, was the first breach of the Kellogg Pact, signed by the Soviet Government only a year before.

The most recent Soviet martial adventure, the full details of which have been obscured because of the remoteness of the region and the absence of independent informants, has been in Sinkiang, or Chinese Turkestan, China's far western province. Taking advantage of a civil war which was raging there between the forces of the Chinese Governor, Sheng Shih-tsai, and Tungan Mohammedan insurgents, who at one time were besieging the provincial capital, Urumchi, the Soviet Government intervened. Soviet airplanes *and poison gas* turned the tide against the Tungs. Sheng Shih-tsai became a pliant tool in the hands of his powerful allies. Non-Russian foreigners are now rigidly excluded from the greater part of Chinese Turkestan.

IV

The list of Soviet wars of aggression and conquest, long as it is, is only slightly known abroad. De-

void of incidents to fix them in popular memory outside the countries affected, devoid of spectacular battles, clearly-defined fronts, and recognizable maneuvers, they made little international impression. In its wars, as in its famines and forced-labor camps, the Soviet Union has taken advantage of its little-known vast interior spaces, where countless people can be "liquidated" and considerable military operations can be carried out with little danger that any specific, documented reports will reach the outside world.

Even from the brief and incomplete survey of Soviet wars of aggression contained in this article, it can be seen that the theory, to say nothing of the practice, of Bolshevism is not imbued with any spirit of international peace and goodwill. Lenin always emphasized the idea that the Russian Revolution was not national, but international in scope, that there was a positive obligation on the part of the Russian Communists to help the cause of revolution in other countries. Two of the many excerpts from his writings which illustrate this point read as follows:

The victory of Socialism in the beginning is possible in a few capitalist countries or even in one capitalist country. The victorious proletariat

of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized Socialist production in its own country, would rise against the remaining capitalist world, attracting to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, arousing them to uprising against the capitalists, coming out, if necessary, even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states. . . .

Down with preachers' sentimental and silly sighs for "peace at any price". Up with the standard of civil war!

Realizing the portent of these principles, there is little reason to be surprised at the fact that there is more war-mongering in the Soviet press today than in those of all other countries put together. There are few large powers which have not at one time or other been accused, without any credible proof, of plotting attacks on the Soviet Union. Japan and Germany are, of course, the main villains in Stalin's fantasy of interventionist schemes at the present. But a few years ago, Great Britain and France were publicly charged with precisely the same designs. Governments that genuinely desire to promote peace do not systematically whip up their

own people to excitement and poison the international atmosphere by constantly circulating scarehead allegations of war danger.

There is some possibility that the highly-colored propagandist picture of the Soviet Union as the lamb-like friend of Peace, menaced by the big bad wolves of Germany and Japan, may gain some credence through blatant reiteration. But the picture most emphatically does not square either with the demonstrable facts of the world armament situation or with the historical record of the Soviet régime. If the Soviet Union, on the basis of its systematic practice of suppressing the self-determination of the minor nationalities, of extending its boundaries and vindicating its alleged rights, wherever feasible, by force of arms, is a champion and exemplar of the higher morality as regards peace and the liberties of small nations, then Genghis Khan was a premature candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize.



DIXIE DEBUNKED

By A. D. MOODY

THE fiction of the Old South is easily the greatest of all American fables. There is nothing to compare with it. Neither the divinity of Lincoln, the virtue of the Noble Red Man, nor the marksmanship of the American Cowboy is to be mentioned in the same breath, for these are either frankly myths or are so feebly constituted as to be easily upset by the debunkers. But the time-worn fabric of mansions and magnolias, swords and hookworms, belles and mammys, honor and simian rascality, leisure and comic black faithfulness, crinoline and unconscious wealth, aristocrats and po' white trash, balderdash and flapdoodle, is different.

It is fearfully and wonderfully made, this myth. The warp of it appears to be history and its woof is high-browed credence: and therein lies the fable's curious defense. For although as absurd as anything believed by men since the last witchburning, the great Plantation Legend cannot be attacked with temerity, because its nomen-

clature is deeply embedded in the standard works of reference, and our most honored literary artists turn to it repeatedly.

The tradition presents a numerous bucolic aristocracy, living superbly in mansions hardly less imposing than the White House, amid swarms of hilariously happy and fanatically faithful darkies; a well-integrated and patrician society; a body politic of drawling feudal lords, all polished in universities, hot-tempered but benign, honorable, and jolly. They had no business worries; their Yankee overseers (Legrees all) superintended the romantic activity of growing a vaguely large crop of cotton for which an uncouted but adequate sum of Yankee and English gold was annually received. The planter-noble concerned himself solely with the welfare of his slaves, the pleasant details of his abundant living, and his entailed code of honor.

In this Nietzschean scheme of things there was only one flaw. Along the boundaries of the plant-

er's countless acres prowled a dreadful horde of shambling, whining yahoos, whose very existence was an indelicacy to the planter-noble and his rarified ladies. They lived in wretched hovels; they ate hog and hominy three times a day; they suffered one and all from pellagra; they did practically nothing but propagate. Now and then one of them would plant a couple of acres of cotton, but these he would abandon before maturity. Meanwhile, the planter-duke and his duchess, in constraint of *noblesse oblige*, were unwearingly kind to these sad anthropophagi, even reproving the slaves sometimes for their expressions of maniacal contempt.

And so goes the Old South legend, a fanciful fable which has fetched the imaginations of millions of post-bellum persons. According to arithmetic, however, all this could not have been. There was no society of planter-aristocrats. Big owners, *i.e.*, those who possessed as many as a hundred slaves, were hardly more numerous among the white population than albinos. All of them from the District of Columbia to Mexico were no more than enough to man the social ramparts of one Congressional district. The average white Southerner never saw a Big

Planter. Had he met one, the average Southerner, being merely a pistol-toting pioneer of no social sensibility, would have given the nabob only half the road. And more than half the road the Planter, being what *he* was, a necessarily democratic kulak, would certainly not have demanded. That premise of the Old South myth which presents an arrogant, foppish minority, dominant on the edges of the wilderness, is one of the sillier components of the whole fabrication.

Nearly ninety per cent (87.8) of all slave-owners were two- and four-horse farmers. They knew nothing of the *code duello* and were incapable of Elizabethan rhetoric. They employed no overseers, but worked sweatily in the fields with their black chattels. Yet of even greater historical significance is the fact that three-fourths of the entire white population of the South owned no slaves at all. The po' white trash!

In the old, romantic presentation of Dixie, these benighted persons were barely mentioned. But in late years a great light has come to beat upon them. Proletarian fictioneers depict them masterfully; they are exhibited on Broadway; a formidable platoon of critics from Minnesota and New Jersey examines

them in the monthly press. To me, however, a Southerner who has lived with them from birth and *is in fact one of them*, the result is decidedly unsatisfactory. The writers and the critics don't know what they are talking about.

Consider the term *poor white*. Philologically, it is the antonym of *planter-aristocrat*. Like all nomenclature of the Old South it is anti-historical, as is immediately apparent when a sound definition is attempted. Because three-fourths of the population of a country is an awkward segment to classify. An extremely credulous person, say an amateur eugenicist, will do it readily, but any historian worth his salt will hesitate.

And what of the eighty-eight per cent of slave-owners whose black retainers were few per capita? They are unanimously disowned by the laureates of gentry. They are denied the status of middle-class, and rightly, for they were not an established middle-class, but poor whites trying the economic device of slavery — a simple device because most slaves could not be sold for cash. That is, a dealer would take the note of any farmer with title to sizable acreage. Thus a Scotch-Irishman whose father had emigrated from Pennsylvania to Georgia or Tennessee (his fa-

ther's brothers had possibly gone to Ohio or Illinois) might become a slave-owner; and many a Scotch-Irishman did. In fact, slave-ownership as a mark of class is no more dependable than tractor-ownership.

All the non-slaveholders, then, plus eighty-eight per cent of owners — roughly, all but one-fortieth of the white population — were po' white trash. This horde, according to the Legend, cowered snarling before the blue-blooded fortieth. They had, presumably, no social and economic activity of their own. They voted meekly as the Agricultural Royalists directed. They fought four years for a political cause that frankly excluded them. (And yet this is very strange, for they were largely of the same stock, the same migration, and the same characteristics as the Americans who were pioneering the egalitarian West.) They were uncouth, untaught, amorphous in the mass, and infinitely variegated individually. At first glance, even at second glance, they would seem to have been a difficult *canaille* to manage. How the planter-aristocrats ruled them so easily, with no political machinery but rudimentary democracy and no economic device but unorganized agriculture, is one of the major mysteries of American history.

The planters, planter-aristocrats, Southern chevaliers, dwellers in mansions, however, are still to be reckoned with. Who were they? Descendants of Jacobites, of course, with an exotic strain from the scattered French nobility. The most plebeian taint allowed them is a drop or two of Huguenot blood. According to the Legend, the climate, wealth, the habit of command, and mammy's milk made them a homogeneous and wholly admirable race, composite of the English squire, the courtier of Le Grand Monarque, and the Hollywood idea of a Bedouin sheik.

But the truth is, of course, that the Old South aristocrats were a hodge-podge of simple, ignorant peasants, speculators, politicians, mountebanks, grafters, and moderately civilized men. Some of these owners of many slaves were perhaps as genteel and as literate as modern grocers; others despised shoes, refused to wear collars, kept their whiskers pickled in ambia, bathed once each year, talked in inelegant English, and scratched themselves before company. Hardly any of them were really wealthy. The "mansions" they lived in were distinctly inferior to the domiciles of Wisconsin dairy-farmers. The people of genuine education and distinction were pro-

portionately fewer and individually less impressive than the people of the same class in the North.

In brief, the immortal Dixie gentry were largely poor white in origin. The notion that they were not is no more credible than the billing of movie actors as descendants of Aztec kings and Balkan princesses. If the fact is admitted, the inference is plain. The correct definition of "poor white" is — *almost everybody south of the Mason and Dixon Line who was not black.*

II

The stuff that made the jeweled wheels of the Old South go round, they say, was a white fiber that grew in long lovely rows and was eventually shipped to Liverpool. Fortunately for the Legend, most of the people upon whom it has been perpetrated know nothing about cotton-growing. Otherwise, the glamorous edifice could never have been erected. The people least likely to believe the myth are the poor mortals who today operate real plantations in that same glorious Deep South. No one who knows as much about cotton-growing as I do could believe it; the thing was economically impossible.

Following are the estimates of

ante-bellum cotton prices issued by the Bureau of the Census:

1830.....	9.7	cents	per	pound
1840.....	9.5	"	"	"
1850.....	12.1	"	"	"
1860.....	13.0	"	"	"

Few others than cotton-growers can comprehend these simple figures. They mean that there was no profit in cotton-growing before the War, and that cotton-farming then was the same precarious business it is today. There was no luxury, no ease and freedom from economic care. Not with cotton at an average of ten cents a pound.

The obvious answer will be that ten cents before the Civil War was much more than it is now, and that the ante-bellum planter could produce cotton at a lower cost than his descendants today. The obvious answer is wrong on both counts. A dime was not so much in those days: prices were higher than most people believe. As for the cost of producing cotton, no figures are available, but it was certainly not very low. Slave labor was admittedly wasteful and inefficient. The seed was sown by hand; the plows used were little better than forked sticks; the land in most cases was a forest of stumps. The ante-bellum farmer's yield of cotton per acre was almost certainly lower than the average yield today.

According to the conventional authorities, a Southerner who produced 100 bales of cotton a year was accounted a pretty big planter. Allowing him an average yield of half a bale per acre — higher than the average now — he must have had 200 acres annually planted to cotton, and a total acreage of between 500 and 800. He must have owned more than fifty slaves; for a slave was good for no more than ten acres on the best-managed plantations. Each slave cost approximately as much as a modern tractor. So considering all these items, if his cost of production was, say, five cents per pound, the planter-aristocrat had a net profit of about the same amount. Or something like \$2500 for his 100 bales.

Now anyone can live on a farm in a degree of comfort on \$2500 a year, and even, if he is whimsical, maintain an aristocratic mien; but could he pay for the sumptuous state the haughty farmers of the Old South are averred to have enjoyed? The life depicted in the average novel of the Old South would surely have exhausted a year's income in a month. Furthermore, the writer, who has sold cotton for almost all prices between five and thirty-five cents a pound, feels that he has been over-gener-

ous to the Swords-and-Roses faith; he does not believe that the average Big Planter had an income as large as \$2500, or anything like it.

The South was always poor. The ruin and desolation pictured as its abnormal state after the Civil War, and particularly the poverty charged to Reconstruction, appear to be greatly exaggerated. Such data as exist show the South wealthier, and wealthier per capita, a few years after the war than before it. The income from cotton, to be specific, was larger in 1870 than it was in 1860.

III

Apparently nothing concerning the South has escaped distortion by mythology. The history of Secession and the Civil War is decidedly warped by it. Recently, several surfeited critics damned all Civil War novelists for excessive romanticism, doing them an injustice, it seems to me; for the worst of the novelists has not departed widely from the descriptions of the Old South furnished by authoritative historical writers. Read the article on Secession in the nearest cyclopedia, and you will probably find the Old South Myth in all its improbability. A preamble describing slavery as a humane institution (in the main it

was savage); a planter-aristocrat society; the South a cotton Golconda, etc. Even the ablest American historians have been naïve believers in the gentry-and-mint-julep legend, with the result that their picture of the Old South is almost as incredible as that presented by a magnolia-and-crinoline best-seller.

The Confederacy, it is written, was the planter-aristocracy in arms. The Confederate soldier, though he is admitted to have come home in rags to find the mansion in ashes and all but a faithful few of the hundred slaves demoralized by carpet-baggers, rode away to war caparisoned like a Walter Scott hero, attended by his body servant, and singing *Jine the Cavalry!* (The significance of the word "jine" in that famous ditty has never been recognized.) But also, all Southerners, including presumably the poor white trash, believed rabidly in States' Rights, Slavery, and Secession.

Actually the real Confederate soldier was a poor, bewildered squatter, in little worse shape when the war was over, if he escaped un-mutilated, than when it began. He never heard of the doctrine of States' Rights; he had no real interest in slavery, because he owned no slaves. His only incentive to

starve, freeze, and die for the Cause was merely a hatred of "damn Yankees", induced by the crude war-propaganda of the times. His officers were mostly men just like himself, or a little above him.

And so it goes. The mythology of the Old South marches merrily on. As stuff for romantic novels it is evidently far from exhausted, and to date not one eminent member of the intelligentsia, unless it be Thomas Wolfe, has publicly renounced it. The More-Abundant-Lifer, reducing the problem of farm tenancy to its component

parts, uses it for sociological reference; and the free-lance critic from Connecticut, inditing a monograph on lynching, dips his pen in it. And yet its origin is fairly clear. Some eighty-five years ago the Abolitionist pamphleteer, who had never been south of Pittsburgh, wrote: "A few arrogant, domineering, self-constituted aristocrats rule the South." For quite human reasons the picture was not resented. It was allowed to become the North's idea of the South.

I predict that a century from now, it will still be the stuff of which fables are made.



ROOSEVELT'S BID FOR DICTATORSHIP

BY FRANK R. KENT

WITH the single exception of President Roosevelt's so-called Court-Packing Bill, defeated last year after a long and desperate struggle which stirred the whole country and inflicted wounds still far from healed, no legislative proposal has engendered more under-cover heat than the Departmental Reorganization Bill now before Congress. As originally conceived, this extraordinary act was clearly a companion piece to the Court Bill: the latter was to give Mr. Roosevelt control of the judicial branch; the former aimed at centralizing practically all administrative authority in the hands of the Chief Executive. This combination would have given the President virtually all the power there is in the American government — complete dictatorial authority.

Under this set-up, neither Congress nor the Courts could have opposed the White House will. We would have had, in essence, a one-man government of irresistible strength, equipped with the means to crush opposition and perpetuate

its own control. This is not a strained statement. The facts fully bear it out; no unbiased person who has grasped the full implications of these two linked proposals can avoid that conclusion. Likewise, it is impossible to believe that Mr. Roosevelt did not know the heights to which success in his 1937 program would have elevated him. It is equally impossible to believe that the partial failure of his dictatorial plan was not a staggering blow to him. Taken as a whole, these two bills made up an amazing conception, a fuller understanding of which would be salutary to every American citizen.

Fortunately, the conception has so far met with failure. The collapse of the effort to dominate the Courts was, of course, complete; the great reorganization scheme now before Congress will be toned down considerably before it is passed. The heart of the scheme is already out — that complete authority which the President wanted more than anything else has been denied him. The power he first

claimed was his in 1933, and which the Supreme Court emphatically told him in 1934 was not his, he tried to establish in this bill—to wit, control over the great quasi-judicial commissions created by Congress and operating independently of the President—the Interstate Commerce Commission, Federal Trade Commission, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Reserve Board, Federal Power Commission, National Labor Relations Board, and Securities and Exchange Commission. No matter what else he obtains, the fact that the Administration forces in charge of this bill have been forced specifically to exempt these boards and commissions, after having directly sought to subject them to executive control, is an extraordinary defeat for the President and a signal victory for those who held that the measure was revolutionary and un-American—in particular, a personal victory for Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia, who, for more than a year, almost single-handedly has fought against the bill; who has been the one figure who stood in the path of the President; who refused to be pushed aside, blanketed or bullied; who by constant hammering, in season and out, compelled an analysis, awoke the in-

dependent boards to their danger, thwarted the original White House design, and impregnated Mr. Roosevelt with such feeling that today he cannot hear the Senator's name without exhibiting temper.

In view of the President's revolutionary bid for authority—almost achieved without one American out of a hundred even having heard of it—it is worthwhile to recall the history of the movement for reorganization which culminated in this most recent Roosevelt maneuver. In the first place, there is of course nothing new in the effort to reorganize the Government; there have been at least ten such attempts since 1830. Several never progressed beyond the report stage: two resulted in the creation of new departments. Another, requested by President Wilson, was designed to strip the vast wall of governmental machinery, but Senate amendments rendered it ineffective: still another, under President Harding, led to the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921. And in 1931, Mr. Hoover submitted comprehensive reorganization recommendations which were not acted upon because he had on his hands a bitterly hostile Congress, determined to give him nothing. And then, for five years, no one so much as men-

tioned reorganization, though in that period the need had grown as never before, because the governmental structure had been expanded beyond any preconceived dream. In New Deal Washington, the bureaucracy's multitudinous activities grew so varied and numerous that no man could keep track of them; more new federal jobs were created in those three years than during the whole first century of the nation's existence. A vast number of new agencies sprang up, many of them overlapping, all spending money, few of them with any responsibility, and all thriving in a veritable federal jungle through which it was impossible to find a way. An idea of what has happened can be had from the perfectly provable statement that outside Washington (which eliminates all the main governmental offices) the Government today leases and occupies office space equivalent to fifty-two Empire State Buildings—or more than one for every State.

Appalled by the awful confusion and incredible waste caused by this duplication and overlapping—as exemplified in such facts as the existence of fifty separate Federal legal divisions, thirty-four agencies concerned with the acquisition of land, sixteen agencies concerned

with wild life conservation, ten with construction, nine with credit and finance, twelve with home and community planning, three with insuring deposits and loans, twenty-four with lending Government money—appalled by this situation, which grows steadily worse, Senator Byrd in January, 1936, introduced in the Senate a resolution calling for an investigation of the Federal executive agencies “for reorganization and simplification in the interest of efficiency and economy”. The Senate promptly passed the resolution and a Senate committee was named with Mr. Byrd as chairman. An advisory committee was selected by him composed of Louis Brownlow, Luther Gulick, President Dodds of Princeton, ex-Governor Gardiner of Maine, and John Clark of Nebraska.

Senator Byrd's committee was making good progress when, two months later, Mr. Roosevelt announced that he had appointed a committee to “investigate and report” on a reorganization plan. While he entirely and, it seemed, intentionally ignored the Byrd resolution and committee, the President took two of Senator Byrd's expert advisory members—Mr. Brownlow and Mr. Gulick, and, with Mr. Louis Merriam, put them

on his own committee. It was a singular thing to do. The inevitable effect, of course, was to wet-blanket Senator Byrd, and no one doubted that such was the President's purpose. The Senator, however, publicly welcomed the President's interest, asserted his willingness to co-operate, gave no evidence of resentment, and declared that real reorganization could come best through Presidential leadership.

In February, 1937, nearly a year later, the President's Brownlow Committee made its report, which, with his full endorsement, Mr. Roosevelt sent to Congress. It went in almost simultaneously with the Court bill and was scheduled to be taken up next. But the long battle over the former disrupted that schedule, and the reorganization proposals for many months lay in a committee, of which Senator Byrd was a member but which was heavily packed with the President's Senatorial yes-men who, instead of holding public hearings, considered the bill in secret. There was nothing secret, however, about Senator Byrd's opposition to the Brownlow proposals. On the air and in the press, the points he made—and which many others made later—were these:

First, that the bill immensely ex-

tended the power of the President, enhanced his control over appropriations, restricted the Senate's right of confirmation, and increased the size and weight of the Federal bureaucracy.

Second, that the bill, in its complete centralization of power in the White House, changed our system of government, evaded Constitutional restrictions, and was revolutionary in character.

Third, by putting them under the President, the bill destroyed the independence of the great quasi-judicial boards and commissions created by Congress and expressly freed from Executive domination.

Fourth, it wiped out the only independent audit of Government accounts and removed the only agency capable of checking Administration expenditures, by abolishing the office of Comptroller General.

Fifth, it put the Civil Service into politics by abolishing the Commission and giving the President power to name a political appointee as Commissioner.

Sixth, it made this more completely a one-man Government in a way wholly repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution and never contemplated by the people.

Seventh, it is the only reorganization plan of which there is any

record for city, state, or nation, the chief merit of which is *not* the saving of public money. Any private business reorganization that did not save money, of course, would be absurd. Yet no economies are even claimed for this plan by its authors, who frankly say they were not directed to, and did not approach their problem with economy in view.

Perhaps the most severe criticism of the original report came from General Hugh S. Johnson, who wrote as follows:

The effect of carrying out its recommendations would be to change the very essence of our form of government and to concentrate a vast collection of power not in a Federal Government but in a Federal Governor. There can be no question about the purpose and trend of this bill. It is sharply away from checks and balances, and toward one-man government. It is silently but powerfully revolutionary.

An even harsher indictment was recently made by Mr. Amos Pinchot. Various other men, in and out of Congress, have assailed the scheme, and it has been the theme of considerable editorial criticism; but the stark nature of that original proposal never really permeated the public mind. Of course, the main reason was the long months it was kept under cover and the absence of real debate. But the in-

tention of the man who framed it is just as clear as if he had successfully carried out his coup and made himself a dictator.

II

It is extraordinary that such a revolutionary attempt at changing the form and character of our government could have come so close to success, with so few among the general public aware that any such business was afoot. Had it not been for the determined opposition of Senator Byrd and a few others the reorganization conspiracy might have been successful.

As the bill now stands before Congress, it is in very different shape. Its most outrageous feature—control of the independent boards and commissions—is expressly killed in the Senate bill, which is the serious one, the four House bills, containing the more radical features, being considered as doomed. But, even in its more-or-less denatured form, there are still strong objections, and six of the seven points heretofore mentioned can be—and are—raised against it, though somewhat modified in their intensity. Perhaps the clearest view of the facts can be given by summarizing the main features of the present Senate bill,

which has been drawn and redrawn at least four times, and summarizing also the reasons for opposing it. These are the six salient proposals:

First, to create a new department of the Government to be known as the Department of Welfare, the head of which will be a member of the Cabinet, and which will administer all forms of Relief, social security, pensions, veteran compensation, and laws dealing with public health, sanitation, and education.

Second, to create a National Resources Planning Board of five members, a salaried director, and an assistant director, who will "investigate, examine, analyze, study, assemble, co-ordinate, and periodically review and revise basic information and materials appropriate to plans or planning policies for the development and utilization of the resources of the nation, both natural and human, and on the basis thereof, to initiate and propose in an advisory capacity such plans and planning policies".

Third, to create six "administrative assistants" at \$10,000 a year each, to be appointed by the President and "to perform such duties as the President may prescribe".

Fourth, to abolish the office of Comptroller General and the Gen-

eral Accounting office, and create in their place a General Auditing office "independent of the Executive branch", an Auditor General, and a new Congressional committee to be known as the Joint Committee on Public Accounts.

Fifth, to abolish the United States Civil Service Commission and the office of Civil Service Commissioner, creating in their place "an organization to be known as the Civil Service Administration", headed by a Civil Service Administrator named by the President.

Sixth, to confer upon the President the following powers—(1) to transfer or retransfer the whole or any part of any agency to the jurisdiction and control of any other agency; (2) to regroup, co-ordinate, consolidate, reorganize, or segregate the whole or any part of any agency or the functions thereof; (3) to abolish the whole or any part of any agency or the functions thereof; (4) to prescribe the name and functions of any agency and the title, powers, and duties of its executive head. The further power is given the President to fill vacancies in any executive department, independent agency or establishment, if, in his judgment, the position is "policy-determining in character".

The above is a fair synopsis of

the features of the Senate bill as it is expected to pass and as it probably will come from the Conference Committee. They are defended as essential and salutary, though there is no claim that they will save money.

Five solid objections, as made in Senator Byrd's minority report—and by others—can be listed as follows:

First, for three years the bill gives the President virtually absolute control over every agency of the Government. For three years he can shuffle and reshuffle personnel, property, and appropriations as he pleases. For three years nothing less than an act of Congress can nullify an executive order issued under this bill, and that would be subject to veto.

Second, the bill, by banishing the existing mandatory representation on the Civil Service Commission, substitutes for the present bipartisan commission a one-man Civil Service and merit system administrator, appointed by the President, responsible only to him and removable at his pleasure. In effect, this is political control of the Civil Service.

Third, the bill would give the President power to fill vacancies with political appointments to all "key" positions, including those of

the independent quasi-judicial boards, which the bill specifically exempts. By the simple expedient of declaring the position "policy-determining" the President will be able eventually to pack the independent boards to suit his own purposes.

Fourth, the bill, in abolishing the office of Comptroller General and substituting an Auditor General, means the substitution of post-audit for pre-audit, which is wrong in principle. This section of the bill, while pretending to make the Auditor General responsible only to Congress, in reality permits Executive domination and control.

Fifth, the bill, instead of diminishing the number of Federal employees, adds to them; instead of lessening the cost of government the bill will increase it. The utmost claim made in the matter of economy is one-third of one per cent. Actually, expenses would go up, not down. In that respect this would be the only reorganization of its kind on record.

III

Summing up, it seems fair to say that if this bill, as now expected, goes through in approximately its present form, while the President will not get the thing he most de-

sired — to wit, control of the independent boards — and while he has had to modify some and abandon other of his original revolutionary recommendations, he will be given practically complete power, for three years, to reorganize all other administrative agencies as he wants. What sort of job he does depends on his desire, his capacity, his energy, and his determination; but the entire reshuffling will be in his hands. He will not, however, procure all the vast power he originally sought.

Due largely to Senator Byrd, this will not be the kind of reorganization bill the President wanted, but it will not be the kind Senator Byrd wanted either. The Byrd claim was — and still is — that any real reorganization, in addition to increasing efficiency, should save upwards of \$100,000,000 annually — that if it does not do so, it isn't a real reorganization — it's a joke. The President's reorganization, when he finally gets it, may change the

Federal set-up radically, but it won't save a nickel. Perhaps it is fitting that, in the entire history of government and business, the only reorganization scheme which will actually *increase* expenses should have been hatched by the New Deal.

But the most significant point for the average American to remember is Mr. Roosevelt's original and fundamental intentions in this matter. If he had had his way, he would now be the most powerful potentate on earth, and the traditional American form of government would have been an outdated memory of the past.

Let the American voter keep his eye on Congress during the days after these lines appear in print — lest a last-minute attempt be made to reinstate some of the original clauses in the bill. And then, for the future, let him keep his eye most carefully on this White House gentleman who has such an itch for totalitarian power.



NO CHILDREN FOR ME!

ANONYMOUS

I AM never going to be a mother. I don't want to have any children — ever.

Of course this is all wrong, according to the latest ideas; social observers are already upset over the prospective decline in population. The public-spirited thing for me to do would be to bear children. But it strikes me that, even in a Planned Economy, the individual is entitled to decide a matter so personal as whether to have children. I have reached my decision.

I will bring no children into existence to live in the world I know. The plain fact of the matter is that I do not consider life worth handing on. I find nothing in it to warrant procreating children; expending twenty or so years of time, effort, and emotion on each one; and then turning them out to make the best of what appears to me to be a bad situation rapidly growing worse.

I am considered a reasonably well-informed person by my acquaintances, and am even described as “cultured”. I am healthy

beyond the fortune of many; I have never suffered a serious illness. I was graduated as honor student from high school, and “with distinction” by my university. I have never been unemployed, my record starting at fourteen with a salary of \$4 a week and ending, temporarily perhaps, at twenty-six and marriage, with \$3000 a year. So, through perseverance and effort, I reached the enviable status of another guinea pig in the laboratory of a frantic America. From what I read in the newspapers, I am the one that's worrying everybody by not having children. My husband and I are healthy Anglo-Saxons, middle class, college graduates, and as secure financially as an American couple can be today. But we have agreed to end the population-contribution of our families, which has extended over 250 years in America.

Marriage without children may be meaningless and lacking in permanence, although it doesn't seem so to me. Yet children should not be brought into the world to recap-

ture the interest of a philandering husband, nor to bolster a weakening marriage, nor to lend interest to the life of an insufficiently-occupied wife, nor to oblige oneself to learn unselfishness and stability. Neither should they be accidental. Children should be purposely and definitely wanted, for they are more important than marriage.

I do not censure the judgment of my parents in choosing to have children, a fact that would doubtless gratify them. Even thirty years ago my parents had no doubt as to the right way to rear four daughters. They were certain that if they themselves lived upright lives, paid their debts, saved against old age, educated their children to the best of their ability, and saw to the health of their family, they were leading a wise and fruitful existence. The future of their children in America seemed secure.

But such certainty as my parents had no longer exists. We no longer can be sure of the desirability of even the so-called "homely virtues". These can scarcely be honestly required of children in a nation whose leading figures are so obviously without them. And once these virtues cannot be insisted upon, whatever personal satisfactions derive from rearing children disappear.

Modern children are nuisances. They are ill-mannered and selfish. They have neither respect nor consideration for their parents, for other adults, or for one another, and one is inclined to compliment their appraisal. They are exceedingly ill-educated. Their lack of information on fundamental subjects is appalling. They are the healthiest young animals, no doubt, that the world has ever seen. All this may make them better "school citizens" (on which they are graded today), and better comrades for the future, but it makes them exceedingly unpleasant in the home.

If I were sufficiently impressed with my own wisdom, I might assume that *my* children would be different, although I can think of nothing more miserable for a child today than the quality of being different from his contemporaries. (My husband and I might, of course, retire to a desert isle, there to propagate children and bring them up according to our own personal values: but that would not help the declining population problem in America, for such children would never choose to live in this country, nor would they long survive.) No doubt I am the victim of bad logic, distorted ideas, and selfishness. Whatever the verdict, I shall remain childless.

I am unable to discover among a large acquaintance of varying types enough contribution to civilization or to the happiness of contemporaries to warrant the existence of more than ten per cent of the people I know. It seems to me that my friends and I are pretty largely justified in existing only because we, with millions like us, constitute the editorial "mass mind"; we are the consumers graphed by advertising agencies; we are the inarticulate voters subjected to broken promises and alluring radio voices and many lies. We are the people Barnum's famous epigram describes. And we work so hard to earn enough to buy the commodities we are assured we must have, that we have no time to enjoy them. This is what is known as "The American System".

We were subjected, when young, to a system of education and training that taught us many statements which we were assured were facts, and discovered through investigation and personal experience were not. We grew up in the post-war era in which moral codes were tossed aside, and were left with no standard of conduct to guide us except our instincts. Our instincts were distorted through the frenzy of the War-To-Make-Democracy-Safe in

which our brothers were killed and our nation was offered the place of leading the world and got cold feet. America preferred to be owed financial debts to being owed the debt of world leadership. We have no heroes. We had our hero-worship ridiculed by the debunker-school. We were the first generation to be subjected, in our formative years, to the radio and its blare of contradictory stimuli that only the dullard and upper ten per cent could survive by immunity or sensible choice. We saw the sanctity of the home split by infidelities and divorce. We early learned that "life is not like that" — *that* being the stuff on which we were raised.

No, I do not care to bring children into this world. I do not care to assume the responsibility for creating more cannon-fodder, brutal policemen, crooked politicians, pseudo artists, authors of best-sellers, stenographers, factory workers, dishonest judges, bookkeepers, money-grubbing doctors and lawyers, movie stars, nor any of the myriad jobholders they might or might not be able to become and to remain. I would not want to bring up a son to be President of the United States. Even the highest office of the land has become disreputable.

GOVERNMENT ON WHEELS

BY GORDON CARROLL

WHEN the press services of the nation recently announced that Congress, with unaccustomed speed and agility, had approved an appropriation of \$225,000 for traveling expenses incurred by its members for attendance upon the extra session, the average taxpayer grimaced, and let it go at that. In view of the Grave Crisis which the White House said confronted the country, and which made necessary an assembling of our legislative master-minds in Washington, the expense was not exorbitant, even though the master-minds accomplished precisely nothing. But unfortunately for the taxpayer, the \$225,000 involved in transporting Congress to and from the Capital was only one trivial item in the total bill for our newest big business—that of putting the Federal Government on wheels. During the fiscal years of 1936–37–38, more than \$206,000,000 has been or will be spent in purchasing transportation on land, sea, or in the air for the hordes of New Deal emissaries who are now carrying the message

of the Fuller Life into every American home.

Now \$206,000,000 is a sizable amount of money, and will buy a great number of railroad, steamship, and airplane tickets. In fact, the sum exceeds by a considerable margin the cost of transporting the entire American Expeditionary Forces to France during the World War. Yet even the \$206,000,000 does not include the other millions of Treasury money spent for the upkeep of thousands of jobholders' automobiles, for the transportation of countless objects of government property, and the further \$217,000,000 which the taxpayers have lost in the past four years through franking privileges, under which 7000 railroad cars of printed propaganda have been dispatched to every section of the United States. Lastly, the \$206,000,000 exceeds by \$89,000,000 the government's traveling expenses for 1931–32–33, when the Economic Royalists were in the saddle. In such ways does the New Deal nurture its burgeoning bureaucracy.

The next time you stand impatiently at a ticket window and fume while the man at the head of the line fills out and submits a green voucher, you will know that he is on the public payroll. That green slip, which looks like a sweepstakes coupon, is a Treasury voucher, and will buy, and has bought, millions of dollars of free transportation. The next time you step aboard a crowded train or elbow your way to the gangplank of a transport plane, it is a safe bet that a goodly percentage of your fellow-travelers are riding on government money. The next time you stand at the desk of a metropolitan hotel around train-time, and see a horde of travel-stained guests arrive or depart with bulging bags and brief-cases, it is quite likely that as many of them are selling the New Deal as are drumming up orders for paint, leather goods, hardware, and other legitimate commodities. But don't forget that you, a non-public-servant, are paying the bills for all this travel. Perhaps this will temper your reflections as you glance at today's crowded trains, ships, and planes, and remark to your friend: "Well, from the looks of all these people traveling, the Depression must be over."

Unhappily, this carefree bustling about on the part of the agents of

Uplift is not confined to any particular section of the Republic, or even to the United States itself. On the contrary, a good part of the \$206,000,000 has been, and will be, expended for globe-trotting. Consider the following colloquy on government travel expense, quoted from the pages of the esteemed *Congressional Record*:

MR. THURSTON: Do these persons confine their expeditions and explorations to the continent upon which we reside or do they travel all over the world?

MR. KNUTSON: Oh, they have been all over the world. I have a book here called *Soil Conservation* which is really a very interesting document. It is a sort of a travelogue. We sent a man named Lauder milk over to China to study the sand rivers of China. I do not know how many he took with him. Then there is a subject called *Maintaining English Soils in Good Heart*. I do not know what relation good heart has to soil fertility. There is another chapter, *Fifty Years' Experience With Soil Conservation in Japan*.

MR. THURSTON: Did they measure the waterfall of the Indo regions?

MR. KNUTSON: There is an article here on the Punjab Plains. There is also an article showing the rainfall in Java and Sumatra. Over there they have a rainfall of some 270 inches a year.

MR. ANDRESEN: Can the gentlemen give us any reason why they should measure the rainfall in the countries to which he has referred, and how that relates to the United States?

Although all the federal agencies do their bit toward padding the government's travel bill, some

outdo others. For example, the Resettlement Administration, in its feverish efforts to change the domicile of thousands of the Underprivileged, spent almost \$11,000,000 in the fiscal years 1936 and 1937 for transportation. What tangible results were gained from this remarkable outlay no one knows, for the RA's program has been a dismal failure from the start. Another example is the Farm Credit Administration, one of the most active of the New Deal's travel bureaus. In 1936, its traveling expenses totaled \$1,653,619; in 1937, \$2,070,841. But strange to relate, during this two-year period while traveling expenses were mounting, the Administration's accomplishments slumped alarmingly, for new mortgage loans in 1936 were 58.1 per cent lower than in '35, and 85.5 per cent lower than in '34. Statistically, these expenditures for travel represent more than \$46 for each loan made.

In 1936, the travel bills of the Bureau of Indian Affairs totaled \$548,257; in 1937, the figure had grown to \$624,560; and for the next fiscal year the budget estimates are \$714,000. A good portion of these funds was spent on "organizing" the Indians, a favorite pursuit of the Bureau. To date, Commissioner Collier's bright young wiz-

ards have "organized" some half-score tribes of Vanishing Americans, and written constitutions and by-laws for an additional half-dozen. All such organizing work naturally costs money, just as the CIO has discovered in its efforts to enroll the proletariat. But the remarkable part about the Indian program is that in 1937, the Bureau spent \$400,000 for maintenance of automobiles and an additional \$190,000 for new machines—a neat little sum in itself. Evidently, zooming around the great open spaces in cars owned and operated by the New Deal does not come under the heading of *travel* expenses.

And so it goes with the rest of the federal departments, bureaus, agencies, commissions, committees, sub-committees, etc. The New Deal personnel, from top to bottom, is imbued with the motto: "Join the Government and See the World". Remember this the next time you try to find a seat on your favorite train. A lot of those people who are in the Pullmans ahead of you are helping to spend \$206,000,000. And every cent of this sum will have to be paid sooner or later by you, the taxpayer, so that your children can tell their children how the New Deal came to America.

PATERNITY BY PROXY

BY ANTHONY M. TURANO

EVER since Evil rode into Eden on an apple core, the human race has been engaged in a constant moral struggle between the obligation of begetting and the vice of incontinency. To increase and multiply was a divine injunction; but to overdo the only known method was a capital sin. Unable to decide where godliness ended and Satan assumed jurisdiction, each mortal has since answered the question according to his lights and impulses.

The glorious Solomon provided himself with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, in the firm conviction that it was impossible to chastise the flesh and still pass as a benefactor of posterity. My erstwhile patron saint, the holy Anthony of Egypt, languished in a sexless desert, in the equally fanatical notion that race suicide was better than the risk of concupiscence. Lesser human fry have striven to maintain seemly balance between family duty and its concomitant fun; but no theologian can positively say that their

souls will be rewarded for multiplication or condemned for immoderation.

At long last, however, medical science has met the ancient dilemma with a clever, though not very happy, solution — *artificial insemination*. Such is its practical effect that man need no longer be conceived in sin: a stork may be summoned with a magic wand no less chaste than a test tube.

It is well known that in many cases of barrenness, the impotency of the husband is not absolute, but is "due to such male defects as *ejaculatio praecox*, inadequate erectile powers, or a sperm-cell that is relatively fertile, and yet too sluggish to undertake an egg-hunt after being deposited in the vaginal canal. In such instances, the man of the house is instructed to perform the sex act as far as he can. Then science enters the workings, and carries the *homunculus* over into the uterus, where it is likely to strike up an acquaintance with an ovum. The same technique is

indicated in cases where the lack of matrimonial dividends is caused by the obesity of the wife, her ante-flexed womb, or a similar anatomical impediment. It is usually necessary to perform more than one insemination to produce pregnancy. But it is obvious that implantation is bound to be more effective than the natural intercourse of potent persons. It has been plausibly established that normal women experience a period of high fertility about the middle of their menstrual cycle. If the insemination occurs during that time, the chances of its success are enormously increased. According to recognized medical authorities, the implantation should take place in the presence of the husband and a nurse. Such precautions are deemed necessary to make sure that the doctor is at all times manipulating with materials supplied by the legal mate and not fumbling around with unethical instruments of his own.

Since the ritual is performed in strict secrecy, there is no way to estimate its prevalence. It is a significant fact, however, that at least one eminent physician, Dr. Joseph Cohen of New Orleans, considers such service a matter of daily professional routine. After describing half a dozen of his recent cases of

scientifically-managed conception, he explains that each childless couple had called at his office, where "there is a special room set aside" for the good work of replenishing the earth.

Although this form of motherhood has been opposed by theologians, it is difficult to find a valid moral or legal objection. The husband is the father, to the same biological extent that the wife is the mother. The only difference is that the heir owes his existence to medical promotion, rather than to mischievous animal magnetism. It is agreed that the perpetuation of the species is a sacred obligation; and if a man cannot storm Mons Veneris single handed, he is to be commended for his religious fervor when he summons a medical corps to his assistance.

Consequently, most of the moralistic ire is directed against that branch of the technique which may be called *exogamous impregnation*. Taking a lesson from their humble veterinarian brothers, the doctors have recently found that the maternity-starved wife of a totally impotent or eugenically dangerous husband may be replenished by borrowing the vital fluid of a stranger.

It is necessary to remember that ovulation has no physiological de-

pendency on sexual intercourse; and that the ejaculated sperm cell retains its power of fecundation for two or three days. By keeping it at body temperature, it can be delivered by special messenger or parcel post in a thermos bottle; and the giver need not have the slightest personal acquaintance with the ultimate receiver.

It is difficult to learn, of course, how many wedded couples resort to such immaculate conceptions. But there is reason to believe that in the next crop of social eminences and political virtuosos, there will be a few whose inception was due less to passion than to biological planning.

II

About four years ago, John Harvey Caldwell interrogated 200 physicians in the eight principal cities of the United States. Fifty-six of them reported that as many as 300 women who were married to sterile husbands requested impregnation with the potent sperm cells of unknown males. Furthermore, that paternity by proxy is well past its experimental stages is shown by a recent article by Drs. Frances I. Seymour and Alfred Koerner, printed in the infallible *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

After pointing out the wide attention that artificial insemination has been receiving "owing to the success of its practice", the authors list the precautions that the implanter should take in order to make his work legal and ethical. The medical practitioner is urged to procure a written consent from the husband, in which he recites that "it is not possible for me to procreate", and that for the sake of "the mutual happiness and well-being" of himself and his spouse, he requests a designated physician "to inseminate my wife artificially with the sperm of a male" selected by the doctor. Another application is filed by the wife, in which she agrees to conceive in chastity. Having satisfied himself of the sterility of the husband, as well as the health and conceptive ability of the wife, the man of science begins to cast about him for a worthy sire.

Since the doctor's function is that of a chemical middleman, he takes every care to bring about a product eugenically superior to the general run of infants who are being brought into this scurvy world according to the hit-or-miss technique of ancient biological custom. It is no less important, however, to choose a candidate whose blood count, racial origin, and tempera-

mental qualities are the same as those of the impotent legal father. For it would be difficult to imagine a greater medical error than to allow a couple of dark-skinned Mediterraneans to become the ostensible parents of a Nordic blond. Nor would it be easy, in the small talk that usually follows a blessed event, to explain an aquiline nose or a pair of blue eyes in a household of pudgy proboscides and brown peekers. If the reputed father is to submerge his injured ego in the recollection of a broadminded sacrifice, he should be allowed the general makings of the illusion.

There is danger, of course, that the mercenary donor of the life fluid might thereafter experience unscientific qualms, and attempt to find an answer to the question of "where are my children?" To obviate a plurality of paternal claimants, the procuring of the semen is rendered as impersonal as possible. The husband may have a vague impulse to express his gratitude to the man who is pinch-hitting for him in time of dynastic need, but he agrees to remain ignorant, because the accommodating chap is, to say the least, a potential rival. The conceiving woman is simply told that the sperm-vendor is a nice, eugenic gentleman "very

much like your dear husband"; while the donor himself usually occupies a separate hospital, and has no knowledge of the ultimate destination of his chemical substance.

To be sure, the child will be technically illegitimate; but this secret is known only to the wedded spouses and the medical godfather. To insure the filing of a regular birth certificate, Drs. Seymour and Koerner prescribe a little device whereby a new physician who is unaware of the facts is called to attend the parturition.

Moreover, the law has little sympathy with a legal husband who attempts to deny his paternity of a child born to his wife, if he had any actual or potential access to the conjugal couch. In an English case heard a few years ago, the wife testified that she and her husband had strictly observed a platonic pact. Her only explanation of her rotundity was that her legal partner had sometimes walked in his sleep, and that, for all she knew, he must have repudiated his vow of chastity while she slumbered. The House of Lords solemnly held that the husband was the legal father. In the famous American case of *Stillman vs. Stillman*, the husband contended that he had been separated from his wife, and that he

could not have been the father of her child. The ruling was that, since Stillman had lived in the same town, and sexual access to his wife had not been a physical impossibility, all the legal presumptions were in favor of his paternity.

It would be difficult to argue that procreation without copulation constitutes adultery. According to the current legal definition, this offense is "the sexual intercourse of a married person with a person other than the offender's husband or wife". Never dreaming that there could be a contraband stork without a previous sin, the lawgivers prohibited the pleasure itself, regardless of consequences. In the case of artificial impregnation, no sexual contact is involved; and though saints and rakes may differ as to the gravity of the wrong, neither tribe will seriously insist that adultery may be committed in a test tube. The seminal merchant may not even be in the same parish at the time of the implantation; and it would be hardly possible for a man to violate the Seventh Commandment by absent treatment at the moment that he may be enjoying a game of golf or even reciting a litany in church. Indeed, when judged according to the scriptural standards, the function of such anonymous preservers of the race

ought to be commemorated by some sort of phallic Monument to the Unknown Father; and it would be no less rational to bestow, upon a sperm-distributor of unusual generosity, the additional title of the Father of His Country.

Another pertinent question is whether the child could enforce, against its chemical sire, a right of support or inheritance; or whether the father could petition a court for custody of his scientific offspring. Although both questions must be answered in the affirmative, as a matter of abstract law, it would be difficult to prove the relationship. It is a well-recognized legal rule that no physician can divulge professional confidences without the consent of his patient. The sperm-donor could waive his privilege only so far as he was personally involved; but as to the actual fecundation, the mother's silence would bind the doctor to secrecy. The child itself could not compel anybody to disclose the circumstances of its creation, for the simple reason that it was not a patient, but merely a scientific possibility at the time of the transaction. So that the case would fall for lack of evidence, even though the sterility of the husband were admitted.

III

The plausible argument in favor of sinless conception is that there is no other method whereby thousands of mothers can be saved from a life of barrenness. A man may possess all the social virtues of a husband and be no slouch in his boudoir performances; but this does not make him, *ipso facto*, a prolific or worthy father. His glandular equipment may be totally lacking in sperm cells, or his genes may be tainted with such inheritable strains as hemophilia, epilepsy, and paranoia. Yet it would be silly to ask his wife to divorce him in favor of an athletic longshoreman whom she could not endure as a life partner; and to insist that she must suppress her maternal instinct would be not only a denial of a personal right, but would also prevent a socially desirable activity.

In brief, it is difficult to see any rational objection to artificial impregnation, if the doctors will limit the business to meritorious cases. But it is certain that if the technique is ever adopted by the general population, the social possibilities are staggering. The laboratories of the land may soon be stocked with an assortment of bottled procreative compounds, avail-

able to experimenting women on demand. The wife who hesitates to bear an heir for a lord and master whose I.Q. is low, may choose to conceive by implantation from Genius Vial 70703-B, double strength. Her maternally inclined sister, whose husband is rheumatic, may prefer Dictator Tube 805302-C, guaranteed essence *Hitlerensis*. Another applicant, wishing to consecrate her issue to a life of holiness, could have herself inseminated with the bootlegged divine sperm of a cardinal, thus reviving a human strain that has not propagated itself for centuries.

It was recently demonstrated by Dr. Gregory Pincus in his experiments with rabbits, that once the female ovum has been fertilized, the only function of the mother is to provide nutrition. The embryo will develop just as completely if transferred to a "host mother" who has had nothing to do with the conception. If these findings are ever applied to the human species, it will follow that a lady who is too busy with politics or social engagements may reproduce herself without the burdens of pregnancy or the labors of parturition, by simply lending a fertilized ovum to her housemaid.

Another equally disturbing accomplishment of Dr. Pincus was

the fertilization of a rabbit ovum with a saline solution rather than male sperm. Since the substitute compound was lacking in the y chromosome, without which male issue is impossible, the result was a litter of females. If the experiment works with the higher quadrupeds, it is obvious that whatever remains of male supremacy will be dissolved in the same brine from which all life originally sprang. The prospect of a world populated wholly by women may be only a few thousand rabbits away from biological possibility. If religious authority is needed for such a convenient and easy parthenogenesis, it can be found in the Christian-scientific works of the revered American saint, Mary Baker Eddy.

As against these terrible speculations, Mere Man can only take courage in the doctrine of total depravity, and the well-known im-

mortality of evil. Chastity is by no means the only moving force in this mundane life. God is love; and Satan has so far managed to impose an abdominal interpretation. Artificial insemination is likely to become an accepted practice in pathological instances. It is also probable that a few feminists and Lucy Stoners will resort to the scientific substitutes out of pure spite, or as a declaration of biological independence. But as a general rule, it is easy to predict that old-fashioned copulation, even at the risk of incidental pleasure, will continue to hold its own as a delightful indoor sport. Even the most fanatical political revolutionist is a hopeless reactionary in his home work. Dame Nature may not be always eugenic, but she can be trusted, despite the conveniences of birth control, to produce in her own way just as many babies as a sterilized syringe.



ENGLAND LIQUIDATES LIBERALISM

BY LAWRENCE DENNIS

ANTHONY EDEN's resignation as Foreign Secretary for Great Britain is perhaps the most significant post-war event in the decline of Liberalism. It also marks an all-time low for British prestige, which has been continuously making new lows since the advent of Adolf Hitler. Mr. Eden's departure confirms three changes of major importance for the destinies of the British people, and, perhaps, also of the American and French peoples. These changes are: First, the abandonment by Britain of collective security as an objective and of the League of Nations as an instrument of British policy; second, the return by Britain to the pre-war balance of power diplomacy under which she can freely use the full bargaining power of her markets, her finance, and her navy, instead of playing the preposterous role of world policeman; third, the turning point in the decline of British prestige and bargaining power.

Surely the present state of the British navy, British trade, and

British morale does not warrant the present level of Empire prestige. No doubt, Britain will decline in years to come: her present birth-rate dooms her to the rank of a second-rate power in another fifty years. But she owes it to the world as well as to herself to decline somewhat more slowly than she has since 1935. Up to February 20, 1938, any stuffy old gentleman in any good American club would have told you that England was soon going to complete her rearmament and then put a stop to all this foolishness by Fascist upstarts. It is hardly fair of the British to let down all our stuffy old gentlemen and Dorothy Thompsons as they have done the past few weeks. These misguided persons — who include in their number a statesman given to making wild statements about quarantining wicked nations — might have spared themselves disappointment had they only appreciated the indisputable facts of life on this planet.

Most Americans believed until a month ago that Mr. Eden had sold

the British Conservative Party on collective security. As a matter of fact, he had sold them only his personable self. Mr. Eden was a lucky find for the Conservatives in 1935. They needed both a devil and a knight in shining armor. Mussolini made an excellent devil—and Anthony Eden was the answer to any Conservative's prayer for a fair-haired demagogue. For catching the votes of British mugwumps, ex-Liberals, pacifists, enfranchised females over 18, and British sentimentalists too numerous to classify, he was a natural. He could vie even with Ramsay MacDonald in talking about "the peace of the wurld", using an Eton-Oxford accent instead of a Scotch burr.

The British Conservatives were lucky in the late Depression. Unlike our Conservatives, they had a Labor government in power to receive the Depression, and they were able to take over from the Radicals at the bottom of the slump, whereas our Conservatives had to give over to the Radicals. But this piece of British luck had its disadvantage for the Tories, wherefore the need for Eden and Mussolini. In Stanley Baldwin, the Tories lacked a demagogue with sex appeal and a good radio voice. And as for a devil, they

had to have a foreign one, for unlike Mr. Roosevelt, they could not blame the Economic Royalists, *i.e.*, themselves, for the Depression; nor could they blame the Radicals who had fought to defend the gold standard and who, at the bottom of the slump, had obligingly turned over the reins of government to the best families, remaining in office though not in power to aid their Conservative betters in bringing about recovery. Eden and Mussolini thus conveniently supplied the fine St.-George-and-the-dragon pageant for the British booboisie in the elections of 1935. Parliament was dissolved on October 25, 1935, nominally on the issue of supporting the League in respect to Italy and Ethiopia. Mr. Baldwin asked the country to approve in the general elections called on November 14, the stand taken by Mr. Eden as British Minister in charge of League affairs.

In the political exigencies of this rather peculiar situation, Mr. Eden, like many another good salesman riding the crest of the wave, was given too much latitude. By the end of 1935, he had not only won the election for the Tories, but he had also got them pretty far out on the collective-security limb in the Ethiopian affair. In the best British tradition

of muddling through, the Tories had banked on the other fellow's mistakes to make up for their lack of intelligence. But Stanley Baldwin and the stuffy old gentlemen proved wrong: Mussolini came no cropper in Ethiopia. An Italian fiasco had been anticipated by the Tories who imprudently allowed their Boy Wonder to engage in Mussolini-baiting for the diversion of the British masses. In this way, it was hoped that a cheap moral victory could be capitalized by the Conservatives in British politics and by the Empire for British prestige. But Mussolini, like Hitler, failed to live up to British expectations of stupidity in others.

The Eden role in the Ethiopian crisis, while excellent demagoguery and good collective security, was neither good statesmanship nor good pre-war Conservative or Liberal tradition. And a nation cannot long remain a nation if it sacrifices self-interest to an impractical ideal. That is what devotion to the League requires and that is why the Tory Nationalists let Mr. Eden out.

II

There can be no doubt as to Mr. Eden's sincerity. He could not have sold himself and the Conservative

Party, along with collective security, to a large section of the electorate had he not been sincere. He believes that the ideals of the League and the interests of the Empire are identical. The British Tories do not share that belief. Neither do I. But it is a belief that has been held by some of our best minds, including Woodrow Wilson, William Howard Taft, Elihu Root, George W. Wickersham, and A. Lawrence Lowell, to mention only a few. The psychological explanation of the rise of this belief is not flattering to Liberal capitalist culture, for it is an unmistakable sign of decay. Once a nation begins hoping to hold by legalism what it has taken by militarism, that nation is in full decadence. Only a softening of the brain or a withdrawal from the realities of life can make it possible for anyone to entertain seriously such a hope. Both the British and ourselves suffer from too much feminine and senile thinking.

The idea that collective security is Britain's national interest was never a part of British policy or British pre-war Liberalism — which was usually good nationalism. Mr. Eden's failure to sell this idea to the Tories, therefore, is not as startling as many Americans now find it. A powerful leverage in

the balance of power, amounting almost to control, not collective security, was ever the objective of traditional British policy up to the end of the World War. England allied herself with Continental powers to destroy Napoleon but not to establish collective security, not to prevent future wars of aggression, not to insure the rule of international law, and not to protect the weak against the strong. Proofs of this statement are to be found in Britain's refusal to have anything to do with the Holy Alliance, the only serious attempt at collective security in the nineteenth century, and also in the complacency with which England viewed innumerable wars of territorial aggrandizement such as our war with Mexico, the Prussian wars in the 'Sixties and 'Seventies, and the many French, German, and Italian land-grabbing wars in Africa and Asia between 1815 and 1914.

Britain fought Napoleon to redress the balance of power, and entered the war against the Kaiser in 1914 for the same reason. How did post-war British policy become so badly confused with the idea of collective security, which is utterly repugnant to traditional British policy? Briefly, the answer is that in 1916, England, with her

back to the wall, found that she needed the aid of the United States to win, the United States then being under the leadership of a Liberal idealist passionately devoted to collective security. British policy at the peace conference and in post-war diplomacy, furthermore, had to be oriented by collective security for obvious reasons. That ideal had been necessary to get us into the war. It was all that President Wilson sought as our *quid pro quo*. We were the big creditor and were still dishing out credit while the peace treaties were being drafted.

When we refused to join the League, the logical move for the British was to scrap the League and develop a system of alliances appropriate to whatever balance-of-power policy England saw fit to pursue. But the British, not unnaturally, followed what seemed at the time the course of least resistance. This meant preserving the League in outward form, paying lip service to its principles, and trying to use it as a tool of British policy in maintaining the balance of power. (One of the reasons why this course of seeming least resistance has led to an impasse spoke for three hours before the Reichstag on Sunday, February 20.) The course might have worked awhile longer if the Tories had allowed

the League to fall into innocuous desuetude, instead of permitting the zealous young Mr. Eden to use the League as a vote-getting moral issue in a British election.

Britain's significant failure, dramatized by Mr. Eden's relegation to the distinguished company of fighters for lost causes, is not the collapse of collective security, but the loss of British prestige and bargaining power in international diplomacy. The failure to uphold British prestige hardly needs proving when Hitler can bawl out a British foreign minister in a public address on a Sunday morning and have British Cabinet members spoil their week-end to oust the same minister the same afternoon, or when Japanese aviators can machine-gun a British ambassador in China and get away with a curt, "Excuse, please."

III

The Tories who have made Eden walk the plank are out to regain lost British prestige and diplomatic bargaining power. They are not out to destroy Germany, Italy, and Japan in the fury of a good Liberal's vengeance against the wicked. The trouble with the post-war League ideology of collective security has been the total blind-

ness it has created as to the realities of the balance of power. In the collective-security scheme of things, there can be no place for a balance-of-power concept of diplomacy. There should be no balance of power between law-breakers, like Fascist Italy, Germany, and Japan, and law enforcers like the good League powers. A policeman is not supposed to use his gun to bargain with outlaws. He is supposed to use it to bring them to justice. So runs the cock-eyed ideology of the League. This is why the British Tories are turning in their policeman's badge, buying more guns, and planning to talk things over with the outlaws with a view to making a deal favorable to British interests. The outlaws, after all, have been outlawed for doing the things England, France, and the United States did in the nineteenth century in building up their respective empires.

If Britain and France could win a swift war against Hitler and Mussolini, resulting in peace treaties to be faithfully carried out by totally different régimes in Germany and Italy, the result might be a new pro-British balance of power. If such a result were conceivably possible, there would be some point to the pro-Leaguer's demand for a firm policy by the

Liberal democracies and a fight for the principles of the League. If, however, as every sane person knows, the result of a war between the Liberal democracies and the Fascist powers would be either Communism or chaos, or both, over all Europe, that result could hardly be said to constitute a pro-British balance of power.

The European scales are now controlled by the Rome-Berlin axis rather than by England and France, because Hitler and Mussolini are more daring than any Liberal democratic government can possibly be, they having less to lose and more to win by extreme tactics. England and France could not possibly win anything out of a defeat of Hitler and Mussolini, and even if completely victorious in a military way, would suffer incalculable losses. The Fascist leaders would lose power and possibly their lives in the event of defeat. But they stand to suffer the same loss if unsuccessful in peace.

Had England's senior statesmen back in 1904-1911 foreseen Communism and Fascism as the results of an Anglo-French victory over Germany and Austria, they undoubtedly would have averted the World War by making a deal with Germany at the expense of Russia. Lord Haldane favored

some such policy at the time. But the senior British statesmen foresaw a classical war and peace with Germany, similar to what happened between Prussia and France in 1870. The trouble with the peace following the World War was that it created no balance of power favorable to Allied interests and possessing qualities of durability. An artificial situation based on foreign loans and reparations payments, which collapsed with the Depression, had not constituted during the 'Twenties a real balance of power. During this period, the power factors were largely paralyzed by world economic artificialities. With the rise of Hitler, a real balance of power began developing. Over it, the British and the French had no control, for they had no common policy. Instead, they were pursuing collective security.

The only hope the British or French can entertain of wresting from Rome and Berlin some measure of control must lie along the path of dividing the Fascist powers by alternating rewards and punishments. The rewards are markets and loans; the punishments are uses of armed power to favor or disfavor another power in a conflict with a third. The League or collective-security formula makes

it impossible to use this technique. Under collective security there must be no commerce with outlaws and no localized wars. Mr. Eden, with his collective-security demagoguery, has enabled the Have-Nots to achieve a unity which they could never have achieved by themselves. At the same time he has divided the non-outlaws over the question what to do about the out laws. So, while he could energize his enemies, he could not unite his Liberal potential allies. Obviously, Mr. Eden's continental policy has been both un-British and illogical.

The liquidation of Mr. Eden and collective security, combined with the resumption of balance-of-power diplomacy, is the most hopeful news since the war. It will not mean the end of wars nor the beginning of the millennium. It will not mean protection of the weak against the strong nor a freezing of the *status quo*. It will not mean holy wars for international justice. But it will mean international bargaining through diplomacy on the basis of existing force factors. This surely is more desirable than another World War to punish the wicked and end wickedness forever.

In the game of international bargaining, Britain and America have high cards. They control the world's largest markets, to which the Have-Nots desire access. They have vast supplies of loan funds which the Have-Nots need. They have large navies with which they can favor or disfavor the Have-Nots in different conflicts of interest among the latter. By bargaining, they can divide the Have-Nots.

All that is needed to enable Britain and America to re-establish a balance of power favorable to their interests is an end of the diplomacy of collective security. Under that diplomacy, neither Britain nor America can play their high cards in the game of international trading. Under the Wilsonian-League of Nations-Eden formula, Britain and America can only unite and energize the Have-Nots and divide and paralyze the Haves, thus giving the former full control. The old balance-of-power alliances did not prevent wars, but they prevented a world war for a hundred years. What we need in America is the same brand of Tory Nationalism which has finally liquidated Mr. Eden and collective security.

HORROR ON THE NEWSSTANDS

BY BRUCE HENRY

THIS month, as every month, some 1,580,000 copies of terror magazines, known to the trade as "the shudder group", will be sold throughout the nation. Between their frankly lascivious front covers and their advertisements for masculine pep tablets in the rear, these titillating contributions to American *belles lettres* will contain enough illustrated sex perversion to give Krafft-Ebing the unholy jitters. Never, in fact, since the popularity of the Marquis de Sade, has civilization seen such a plethora of Frankensteinian literature as is now circulating in this land of peace and good-will. France may have her Grand Guignol, Spain her wartime atrocities, but only in America is it possible for the masses to go in for vicarious Torquemadian exercises through the simple expedient of patronizing the nearest newsstand.

Some seven years ago the first of the moribund journals made its appearance. That ancestor of modern frighteners was, however, a muling lamb compared to the pulps of to-

day which admit no crime milder than rape and even allow their heroes and heroines a fling at orgiastic hoop-de-doo . . . all in the spirit of good, clean fun of course. Since then, the breed has grown to astonishing proportions, until now it is a rare magazine sales-rack which holds fewer than a dozen different issues of the fearsome family.

What, precisely, are these literary aphrodisiacs? What ingredients go into the bawdy, sometimes perverted tales they contain? Who writes the Poe-esque stuff, and what technique is employed by the dollar-conscious publishers to lure the quarters and dimes of a million-and-a-half people every thirty days? Probably the only satisfactory way to understand and evaluate them is to dissect and study a specimen. Let us manufacture a composite pulp having the attributes of all the leading shudder magazines.

Our journal will be titled, aptly, *Squirm Stories*, and its main requisite is a cover illustration combining sex, horror, and color. This

can be achieved by depicting a beautiful, semi-nude girl (always blonde) writhing on a medieval rack, while a sinister figure pours acid on her extremely buxom bosom, as an harassed youth (obviously the hero) struggles in chains in the background. A frieze of undraped ladies may be artistically strung by their thumbs or hair in the middle distance, the whole characterized by profligacy in magentas and yellows. A generous portion of shudder-group production money is allocated to cover art and reproduction, for it's the blazing exterior that lures the quarters of the transient newsstand trade, and competition is keen.

Skipping the radio college, jewelry-by-mail, learn-law-at-home, and they-laughed-at-my-skinny-form advertisements in the front of our magazine, we insert story number one, "The Ravager From Hell", by Fructon Mahanowell, for which we have paid \$50. Fructon Mahanowell is a hollow-chested fellow from up Boston way who used to write basement store ad-copy and answer to the name of Bill Johnson. He has a wife, two fine children, and a passion for burnt almonds, but he can whip out the most blood-curdling fiction on the market. Fructon, in fact, writes most of the stories in our

magazine, under a variety of pseudonyms, and who cares if they're alike as — shall we say — two skeletons.

Fructon has started his opus in the conventional, stylized manner:

Gelid water gurgled turgidly at our feet, as my fiancée, Cynthia Thorne, and I struggled along the stygian black roadway. Suddenly, the gibbous moon shot out from beneath a cloud and revealed a Thing of slaving jaws and eyes that glittered balefully, like lambent flames. Its maw opened and it spewed an eerie, hideous scream.

"Oh, Frank," my fiancée cried, "I'm frightened."

"There's nothing to be afraid of," I assured her, though utter panic gibbered in my mind. "It was only a stray cat."

Yet I could not help but wonder what grisly horror it was that stalked the high road to Cloaksford Castle.

This entrance into the story theme is strictly standard and not subject to change. We will not buy a manuscript which does not have such words as *gibbous*, *turgid*, *slavering*, and *eerie* in the first paragraph or so. Why such an arbitrary literary rule should prevail, no one seems to know, but publishers give assurance no successful shudder magazine dare ignore it.

At any rate we now have our hero and heroine, apparently betrothed, en route to a mysterious castle. Promptly our author explains that the gentle Cynthia has

inherited the castle as the result of the death of her uncle, Sir Upton Inchville, and together with the redoubtable Frank has come to England to take possession. It is not necessary to explain why they are walking rather than riding to the ancient pile, nor why they are prowling around at night. That's strictly the author's business. Inside the castle Frank and Cynthia find:

Ora Bullin, the caretaker, an evil-faced, shifty-eyed, shrunken mockery of a man; his flat-chested, sharp-nosed wife; a frail and lovely housemaid, Esther; and Boris, a gigantic, hairy servant with hands like hams and pig-like eyes which rest lewdly on Cynthia.

A charming little group in short.

"Doom, doom!" crackles Ora, on learning who his guests are. "Ye'll regret ye ever came to this devil's spawning ground. It's the tomb of a succubus and it's damned."

Boris' obsidian leer, however, bothers Frank more than their host's pleasantries, and he resolves to stay awake the night to guard Cynthia's door.

Now some authors might arrange to have Frank and Cynthia freshly married so a tender between-the-sheets scene could be inserted at this point, but our star writer eschews such obvious devices and seizes the opportunity to devote four paragraphs to Frank's erotic reactions as he says good-

night to the lady. This also allows numerous references to Cynthia's physical attributes, with special accent on the pectoral. (In *Squirm Stories*, all heroines are firm-breasted.) Yet Cynthia gets to bed without loss and our hero stretches himself before her door as watchdog. Then:

A scream, raucous, spine-tingling in its unbridled gagging, rips the midnight air.

Frank awakens, though

his mind is gibbering in utter panic and goes streaking off in the direction of the insensate shrieking. He does not run — shudder group heroes

pound along, legs pumping like pistons

and presently falls into a pit. Or, as variation, he may receive

a crashing blow on the head that sends him sprawling into stygian blackness.

The idea is to get him cold, whatever the *modus operandi*.

Now the reader is well into the spirit of "The Ravager From Hell", and the yarn is shifted into high gear.

Opening his eyes while waves of gouging pain lance his aching skull, Frank discovers he is chained to a pillar in the dungeon of the castle.

But he has company.

The same monster which spewed that eerie, hideous scream on the roadway

is present, garbed in a voluminous cloak blacker than the guts of hell. Only his balefully glittering eyes, like lambent flames, and his slavering jaws from which issue a foam of bubbling curses, are visible. Utter panic gibbers in Frank's mind.

Present also is Esther, the housemaid, now securely fastened to a table in the center of the dungeon. Esther may either be fully clothed

or naked save for a wisp of diaphanous silk across her hips

depending on whether Author Mahanowell wishes to insert a provocative strip-tease scene in his yarn. Whatever her garb, she is

rolling her beautiful eyes in stark terror and pleading pitifully for mercy. Rivers of anger scald Frank's brain.

The Monster at this point explains to his captives (and the no-doubt gentle reader) that he is about to show Frank what fate he has planned for Cynthia in course of time. A preview of the main feature, a trailer of terror as it were, causing Frank's mind to

gibber in utter panic.

Ensues now two and one-half chapters of lurid description detailing the tortures inflicted on the unfortunate girl by the monster. Some of the milder ones the author has lifted from De Sade's *Justine*, although that young lady, for all her fortitude, was a softie compared to

Squirm Stories ingenues — and from standard works on the Inquisition at Seville, Cordova, and Vila Real which he has obtained from the local public library. In addition he may add a few of his own invention, as did the perpetrator of a recent shudder group story whose villain of the piece sprayed his hapless victims with itching powder.

Frank, watching the various whippings, slicings, burnings, and rackings — given onomatopoeiac significance by Mahanowell through sundry, "Oh-h-h"'s and "No, no, no"'s and "Stop, stop! God!"'s, all calculated to do things to the reader's hackles — decides that the Monster is none other than Boris, and while the torturer is busily engaged in removing luckless Esther's left mammilla with a pair of dull manicure scissors, miraculously frees himself of his bonds and escapes. The text explains that by this time Esther is quite past assistance, thus keeping our hero's honor unsullied.

Yet whom does Frank find on rushing back to the upper levels of the castle but Boris, shining boots in the scullery. This provides a nice element of mystery, quite necessary by the way, for all shudder-group stories are whodunits.

Experienced shudder writers always provide a page or two of com-

parative peace at this juncture, allowing time out to explain any items overlooked in the heat of creation and giving the reader a chance to scan the black-and-white pornography which augments the story. It is also customary to insert a four-inch laxative advertisement in the hiatus, though the practice may seem calculated sophistry. By way of variation, a plug for any of the other shudder pulps produced by the same publishing house may be used, employing a thumb-nail sketch of the forthcoming issue's front cover in order to build up what is called "purchase desire" in some circles.

II

Then, quite suddenly,

with the gibbous moon casting eerie rays through the stygian gloom, Frank stumbles on the headless body of the caretaker's wife, her gore-clotted neck-stump spouting gouts of blood.

Beside her still-warm corpse is a hunting knife, causing Frank's mind to gibber in utter panic again. He goes off in search of Ora Bullin, whom — through a process of reasoning known only to the author — he has decided is undoubtedly the perpetrator of the deed. But he finds Ora lying headless in the courtyard,

his gore-clotted neck-stump spouting gouts of blood under the pallid rays of the gibbous moon,

and then indeed does Frank's mind do a real gibber.

Puzzled, even more than the reader perhaps, Frank stands and ponders. Then, right on schedule,

a scream — raucous, spine-tingling in its unbridled gagging — rips the midnight air.

This time the victim is our heroine, Cynthia.

Rapidly, now, the author gets Frank, mind gibbering, back in the dungeon.

Waves of gouging pain lance his aching skull as he opens his eyes and looks into baleful, glittering orbs and slaving etc., etc., etc. On the torture table is Cynthia, fully clothed, rolling her beautiful eyes in stark terror.

Heroines are treated somewhat better than ingenues in *Squirm Stories*. Author Mahanowell has observed this fine distinction by leaving Cynthia fully dressed. The process of unclothing her, of course, not only allows an opportunity for some subtle physiological allusions, gives Frank's mind a chance to do some added gibbering, but also takes up about 500 extra words at one-half cent per if the yarn sells.

Eventually, following custom, Cynthia lies helpless

as the monster runs his hairy paws over her body — naked save for a

wisp of diaphanous silk across her hips. Frank's brain is crawling with maggots of madness.

Comes now to Cynthia some garden variety of torture — nothing violent which might leave scars or cause her undue pain — and most shudder-group impresarios favor elaborate devices such as superheterodyne G-ray disintegrating vats wherein the lady's milk-white body slowly turns to a blackened skeleton unless the hero is spurred on to superhuman accomplishment by her shrieks — raucous, spine-tingling in their unbridled gagging.

Mahanowell, an old-school adherent, introduces as his *deus ex machina* in this story a time-tried device — molten lead, popular since the days of the Borgias — but makes a concession to the modern trend by having the Monster attempt to inject the liquid into Cynthia's milk-white tummy. And in order to bring forth the required shrieks — raucous, spine-tingling in their unbridled gagging — he even allows the Monster to make a small subcutaneous incision in Cynthia's abdomen, thereby

making Frank's mind crawl with maggots of madness as he tears at the gyves and sputters a foam of bubbling curses.

Now Frank is free. He leaps on the roaring monster.

His fist pulps an inhuman mouth and a fetid breath chokes him as gelid hands clutch at his windpipe. Utter panic gibbers, the black maw distends, the jaws slaver. . . .

Then suddenly

a snouting revolver belches a javelin of fire behind them. The monster gives a raucous, bubbling shriek. Gouts of blood spout from his mouth . . . he topples, crashes.

Boris, who fired the shot, stoops down and rips a mask from the Monster's face.

It is Sir Upton Inchville, Cynthia's uncle.

From there on, the author's job is a cinch. He merely has Sir Upton explain with his dying gasps that he faked death in order to get Cynthia in his clutches. It seems she owns oil wells in Texas. . . .

Esther was an innocent stooge. Ora and his wife knew too much. . . .

Boris is a detective.

Frank's mind gibbers as he folds Cynthia's wisp-clad body in his arms and they face life and love together — forever.

III

That is a typical shudder-group story, its form and phraseology lifted almost verbatim from current magazines. In our *Squirm Stories* we will use nine or ten nearly identical tales, varying only as to

locale and characters. Perhaps we will give the eager reader a bonus in the form of a "novelette", which is actually nothing more than an elongated short story, but we won't print continued pieces because our public is a growing one and we must constantly consider possible new adherents of horridica.

Aiding and abetting the fiction we offer, we must give careful consideration to the black-and-white "art" which amplifies and explains the text. The importance of a colorful and eye-shocking cover has already been outlined, but the textual illustrations can be more or less haphazard so long as they adhere to a simple set of taboos made necessary by the fact that *Squirm Stories* rides the U. S. Mail. Delineated in pen-and-ink (at about \$25 per drawing) by a New York hack who once lived squalidly in Greenwich Village but now does very well, if you please, in White Plains, the illustrative matter should include (a) one semi-naked girl; (b) either the villain or the hero of the piece; and (c) be predicated on one of the more horrifying incidents in the story. Each yarn rates three or more of such drawings. In the case of Mahanowell's opus the scene in the dungeon where Cynthia is catching hell is a natural. Esther's bout with the Monster will

also be good for a full page, and even Frank's discovery of the headless body of the caretaker's wife — our artist is a whiz at outlining gouts of blood — will do nicely.

But, say mail inspectors, the illustrations must never show a completely nude wench and the pelvic region must always be obscured in some fashion. Smoke from the bubbling acid vat is usually good camouflage, as is the well-known wisp of silk. Uncovered breasts are admissible, so long as they — quaint fancy — possess no apices, as it were. Thus, though frequent references may be made in our stories to the heroine's "carmine-tipped mounds of warm, snow-white flesh", her accompanying portrait must show those items theoretically malformed.

In the exact center of our magazine we present a two-page feature which has no counterpart in any of the more polite publications. It is a continued cartoon-strip titled "The Astonishing Adventures of Annabelle", ground out, of course, by the same illustrator who does the other esoteric etchings. This Annabelle person is a lascivious looking female who simply oozes sex and has trouble keeping on her clothes. No matter in what circumstances the cartoon continuity puts her, she is always displaying large sections

of her epidermis. Even when fully-clothed — which is rarely — her skirt slips up to her thighs, her blouse slides off one shoulder, and in general she gives every indication of making ready for a good, warm tub, or something.

For the most part, Annabelle's adventures consist of fighting against deflowering by divers fiends. One sequence may find her in Africa where she is hunting her brother, missing these ten years. She falls into the hands of Tarahim, the Terrible Turk, who suspects her of being a French spy and undertakes to force a confession by turning her over to his pet gorilla

for the night. Just as the gorilla has Annabelle well-stripped, in pops Lieut. Ted Daring of the U. S. Intelligence Service, and . . . guess what!

Yet in the marketing of *Squirm Stories*, it's Fructon Mahanowell and his confreres who really sell the magazine with their gibbous moons, their goutts of blood, and their screams — raucous, spine-tingling in unbridled gagging. One-and-a-half-million shudder-group addicts will testify willingly to that.

And, incidentally, so will your observer. He used to be a Fructon Mahanowell himself.



PORTRAIT OF A NEW DEAL SENATOR

By JEROME MASON

JOSHUA BRYAN LEE, a recent addition to the *clarissimi* of the United States Senate and now an aspirant for the Vice-Presidency of the Republic, strode from the cloisters of the University of Oklahoma in 1934, scraped the ivy from his withers, and, with ear-splitting yells and a resounding splash, plunged into the cesspool of politics. Two years later he emerged from his peregrination in the cloaca, perhaps not smelling exactly like the rose, but at least bearing a toga which to him exuded an aura as fragrant and fetching. The Ambulant Pedagogue had been prompted to quit the idyllic life in the academic shade for the miasma of campaign headquarters by one magnet—the Magnificent Obsession of the More Abundant Life and its alluring prospect of fat jobs, power over honest citizens, and a generally swell time at the taxpayers' expense, with banquets at Washington and side-trips to Atlantic City.

Brother Lee, an able enough man in his own groove, was among

the foremost of our budding statesmen to try the magic of the Roosevelt formula; today he is a paragon among the parvenus. Elected to the nether house of Congress in 1934 with no more to recommend him than a profound veneration for the New Millennium, he then distinguished himself by running for the United States Senate on the taxpayers' time. Elevated at last to the dizzy eminence of the Senate, he currently is employing his talents in running for the Vice-Presidency—although he stoutly denies it. Indeed, Brother Lee may be said to have crow-hopped over the mine-run of the nation's pedagogues, theologians, micrologians, shysters, chiropractors, and other devout New Dealers in the hop, skip, and jump to the Federal Gravy Train. And how did he perform this feat of levitation? Let us look at the record.

Before his fancies strayed from the blackboards to the political sideboards, the Good Doctor boasted of considerable public adulation within his own State. As pro-

fessor of public speaking at the University, he had waded through the underbrush of the hinterlands, confounding chambers of commerce and luncheon clubs with sonorous platitudes and jokes exhumed from the McKinley Administration, edifying school-house spelling bees with flap-doodle, and dazzling American Legion orgies with oral bombshells. Small wonder, then, that he stormed into Oklahoma's senatorial combat with wild abandon, where a more cautious warrior would first have tested his armor. Brother Lee suffered no qualms when skeptical seconds, peering into the arena, saw arrayed against him the blind Senator Thomas P. Gore, a hoary veteran with a rough-and-tumble frontal attack, and Governor E. W. Marland, flanked by the fierce skull-crushers of the State payroll. Scholiast Lee dismissed Senator Gore at once as a Tory. Marland, however, was a more formidable fellow, with phalanges of payroll patriots. But there was a ready answer for the entrenched myrmidons of the State Administration. Brother Lee had not spent two long years on Washington's Capitol Hill for nothing. Had not he voted like an automaton for everything Dr. Roosevelt commanded, and had not he shown all the Uplifters that

should they order every Economic Royalist fried tomorrow, he would be in the front ranks of the anthropophagi by sundown?

Brother Lee was, in truth, so highly regarded on the Works Progress Olympus that the minions of the Oklahoma Relief offices flocked to his banner with a will. Senator Gore, who knew some political tricks himself, immediately became aware of the admiration the WPA bore for the Learned Don. The Senator protested with righteous vehemence, but alas, he had got himself in bad odor at Washington with his implacable Toryism. And so the Lee boom thundered on among the boondogglers of the Sooner State while Senator Gore licked his wounds, and whittled his chances of re-election to the vanishing point by quarreling with the new Vested Interests — mayors, school-boards, county commissioners, professional Relievers, pool-hall palookas, bonus hunters, etc.

Brother Lee was not so vacuously inept. He whacked mayors on the back, proposed more cash from the WPA to repair sidewalks, pave streets, build two-holers, rake up the dead weeds on the commons. And in his capacity as a Representative, he took up the cudgel for the soldiers' bonus. Groping around

for a hero, the Legionnaires thus found Brother Lee. Not only did he promise much, but he boasted a service record of fourteen months in the Great War to End all Wars, and so they swarmed to him like gnats to a cider jug. The scholarly Rhetorician, with the sleek brown hair and the messianic glitter, could fetch the catechumens by waving his fist and bellowing: "Your buddy, and my buddy, shall not have died in vain, for in the next war we shall have conscription of wealth, just as we had conscription of man-power, if I have a drop of blood left in my veins to see that this is made the law of the land!" (*Applause.*)

For the lame, the halt, and the blind he proposed the largesse of the United States Treasury; for the aged, a stiffer dollop from Uncle Samuel's cornucopia; for the tenant farmer, a quarter-section of black loam land; for the jobless, an easier time of it on the dole at "prevailing" wages; for the agrarian, lush profits come drought, weevil, frost, rust, smut, hail, hell, or high water; for the impecunious homeowner, long-time loans at one and one-half per cent interest with the government as banker; for the pedagogues, more subsidies; and for the laborer, more lard squeezed from the villainous capitalists.

II

The accent on youth, which is part and parcel of the policies of the Rulers of American Democracy in common with the Totalitarian States abroad, has yanked adolescents and drooling freshmen from the stadia, corner soda-fountains, billiard parlors, cinema halls, and other Seats of Learning, and borne them to high places. It was in the natural course of events, then, that Brother Lee surrounded himself with the flower of Oklahoma's young manhood. Sleek young pop-injays, sweating energy, conceit, and confidence, these Rover Boys printed the pamphlets, spread the half-sheets, fed the mimeographs, curried favors from the press, dealt campaign cards at the auction sales, drummed up crowds, and pitched mud into the other camps.

Not a few of the Rover Boys had been flabbergasted by the Don's acroamatics in the classroom. Others were obvious touts, coached in campus politics to esteem winners only, and they hung to the Don's flying coattails like ticks to a Texas longhorn. Others were civic boosters, mellowed by Brother Lee's postprandial harangues. Others were long-time admirers, who swore he was the greatest humorist Oklahoma had sired since the late

Will Rogers. Scoffing politicians and newspapermen were the first to refer to these aides of the Sooner Schoolmaster as Rover Boys, and at the outset, the designation was considered a derisive epithet, such as "Republican", "Infidel", or "Wall Streeter". But as Brother Lee's vote-pulling amperage attained the jolt of a thunderbolt, and even Marland's Acolytes of the More Abundant Life began to bear respect for these energetic democratic neophytes, the designation lost its evil connotation.

In the Democratic campaign of 1936, when the mercury in Oklahoma bounced up to 120 degrees, Brother Lee bounded from place to place with astonishing agility, and neither blistering heat nor drought could dry the sap in his veins. He would pop up at a farmhouse for breakfast, appear in a hamlet fifty miles away by lunchtime, and would have unburdened himself en route of a gross of extemporaneous speeches. He plunged with enthusiasm into his subject whether he was in a barnyard, on a curbstone, in a band-box, at a WCTU picnic, at a Baptist camp-meeting, in a schoolhouse, in a hayrick, in a wagon, on an oil barrel, in a hotel lobby, in a truck, at an auction, at a spelling bee, in a meadow, on a hillock, on a river

bank, in a roadway, in a warehouse, in a park, in a courtroom, in a theater, in a chapel, in a pulpit, or at a knitting circle. While Gore and Marland were gasping in the oppressive heat and yelling for quarter, Brother Lee was planning to dive afresh into the backwoods. Native Oklahomans, although long inured to a broiling come each Summer, died in great numbers like honest men in Moscow, but there was Teetotaler Lee chasing about the countryside with all the enthusiasm of an Elk on a bender.

The product of such energy is now a part of Oklahoma's political annals. When the votes were counted at the first primary, Brother Gore was panting so far in the rear that even old friends could not make him out in the haze. Election officials toiled late into the night, not to see who led the pack, but to learn if the Schoolmaster had lapped the field to make a run-off primary unnecessary. Although Governor Marland was a badly beaten man, he somehow scraped together enough ballots to reach the run-off.

Sage advisers counseled the Governor to withdraw while there still was time. The Sooner Schoolmaster, they asserted, would give the chief a beating that would resound into the fifth generation. But

Brother Marland was a game guy, if somewhat deluded in the matter of personal popularity, and so he tackled the Lee buzz-saw and came off with his teeth loosened, his ears in disarray, and wounds upon his torso that rankle to this day.

There was still the business of the general election, but Brother Lee had to deal there with a Republican, and since the dawn of the Fuller Life in Oklahoma, there has not been enough of the breed left within the Commonwealth to put out a family washing. As in all other States of the Union save Maine and Vermont, the Republicans either had crawled so deep into their shells of Toryism as to become inarticulate, or had got jobs on Relief. But the thinned command marched manfully to the slaughter. Vainly it cried up its hero, Herbert K. Hyde, a former United States District Attorney, as a champion of the soldier, the toiler, the tiller, the aged, and the indigent. But the New Deal high explosives, in inexpert hands, back-fired or plumped as duds into the midst of the yawning populace. Brother Lee had the election in the bag. When voting day came around, even the deepest-dyed Republicans were unrolling the stretcher and cranking up the ambulance, ready to bear their cham-

pion from the field—feet first. Brother Lee had reached hyperborean heights at last: he stood at the summit, his toga flapping in the cold, clear atmosphere.

III

The Sooner Schoolmaster employed the early days of his Senate stewardship staying away as much as possible from the fratricidal struggles on Capitol Hill. When the court-packing bill was dumped into the Senators' laps, he was off to see his dentist. When his brethren were being disemboweled in the bloody revolt against Dr. Roosevelt, Brother Lee was flabbergasting luncheon-clubs. Apparently, there was motive behind this maneuvering, for among the Scholiast's friends there had been heard mutterings of a Lee-for-Vice-President boom in 1940. And who ever heard of a vice-presidential candidate standing among his fellows with cauliflower ears, bent nose, and missing incisors?

After Congress adjourned, the Don shuttled from State to State but avoided Oklahoma, for once back on native soil he immediately was beset by job-hunters, mendicants, and other pests. If he returned at all, it usually was in the dead of night, and so stealthily did

he move that not even the reporters knew he was in town. And what subject engrossed the Perambulating Professor on his transcontinental dash? What, indeed, but his plan to recruit dollars along with the cannon-fodder in the next World Conflagration. Said he:

"I promised to do everything I could to keep the United States out of war. I've been trying to keep the promise by creating interest in my bill to keep us out of war."

With Spain a charnel house, and China a shambles, and the Muscle Men of Rome, Berlin, Tokyo, and Moscow making the night hideous with their saber rattling, the subject of How to Keep Out of the Next Butchery is one calculated to stir up more than the idle interest of the average Americano. And the salesman who peddles insurance against \$1-a-day-pay to play target for machine-guns, hand grenades, and aerial bombs should soon or late take on the habiliments of a public hero. And Brother Lee would not care at all if he found himself a public hero by 1940, when the New Dealers probably will be scouting for someone to team with His Excellency in a third term *coup d'État*. Cactus Jack Garner, the Texas werewolf, probably would not lend himself

to the conspiracy should it come to the showdown, but the Sooner Schoolmaster, with his prodigious admiration for the Great Emancipator, would have fewer scruples.

Most of the strategists admit that Cactus Jack was mainly a liability in the glorious campaign of 1936, for he stumped not, neither did he gush paeans about the Newer Life. Moreover, the earnest young moujiks of the Second Revolution sniffed suspiciously at his heels and swore they could smell Tory musk. Today, however, the barricades are up in the streets, and the rebels run boldly about in the sunlight, brandishing muskets. When and if the plotters of the *coup d'État* ride out into the field, the counter-revolutionaries will fall heavily upon them on all sides, and then the sorely-belabored New Dealers may be glad enough to have in the press of the van the Sooner Scholiast, who, when the din of battle swells, can combine the lusty promises of Huey Long, the evangelistic fervor of William Jennings Bryan (for whom he was named), the disarming and dentine smile of Dr. Roosevelt, the oratorical frenzy of a Baptist evangelist, the fanatical zeal of Mahatma Gandhi, and the bombastic fury of a Chautauqua spellbinder.

THE TIGER

BY ALAN DEVOE

NOISELESSLY, on cushioned paws, he padded around the cage. His movement was as soundless and flowing as the glide of water; under the sleek-furred hide of his fulvous flanks and shoulders the great muscles scarcely rippled. Around and around and around he circled, pacing as rhythmically as a slow and silent metronome. On the wooden floor of the cage was stained a circular track, signature of his rhythmic pacing circuit, day upon day, month upon month, year upon year.

In one corner of the cage there was a cunningly simulated tree, cast in iron and made fast with rivets to the floor; and in another corner was a kind of kennel, fashioned of concrete and reinforced with steel, to serve as lair. These were the furniture of his world; this was the universe around which he prowled in his unceasing circuit. The iron tree was coated, at the height of his shoulder, with tawny hairs rubbed from him as he passed it on his million rounds; the white concrete of the kennel showed a

smearly stain, where with unvarying ritual he voided his musky urine.

The interruptions of his measured purposeless pacing were only three. They were when he slept, with his great velvety forepaws outstretched before him; and when the strange sounds and movements from that uncomprehended world which lay outside the bars became too insistent to be ignored; and when there reached his silky tufted ears the faint and far-off rumble which meant that the blood-smeared butcher-cart, piled with the day's meat, had been trundled into the building and was approaching him.

He slept as a kitten does, in utter relaxation. In the dark interior of his concrete kennel, warm with the heat of his flesh and pungent with his jungle smell, he could enter into the sanctuary of sleep, of refuge from an alien world and from bewilderment. As he slept his great curved claws would glide forth sometimes and retract again in their soft sheaths, and sometimes

his tail would stir and twitch a little, and tiny growls and whimpers would mingle with the harsh rhythmic rattle of his snore. Such stirrings were the witness to his dreams, to those dim race-memories which would not be effaced except by death. In that dreaming skull were the vague elusive stuffs of recollection . . . of the whipping of bamboo stalks against his flesh, of the feel of the Sumatran sun at noon, of the scent of deer-dung on a forest path.

Most of the time, in his waking hours, he gave no heed to that uncomprehended world, full of shuffling steps and meaningless speech-sounds and peering eyes, which existed outside the bars of his cage. He had been here three years, more than a thousand risings of the sun, until now the unintelligible procession which endlessly shuffled and stared and gibbered outside the bars had come to be hardly more than a dim blur on the rim of his awareness.

At first it had been different, when he was still trembling and disoriented by the quickness of his transition from his old life. The old life had ended very suddenly, when, on a moonless night, he had plunged through the cunning plaiting which hid a pit dug in the jungle path which led to his water-

hole. He had been put in a wooden crate, bound with hoops, and had journeyed in a long darkness across an ocean, and then he had been set loose in his new world of the iron tree and the concrete kennel and the endless unmeaning faces outside the bars. During those first weeks and months here he had rushed often to the bars, and pressed his great muzzle against them, and loosed roar after roar to frighten away the peering faces and silence the shuffling steps. Once upon a time his roar had silenced the heavy-beaked hornbills in the forest, and the bands of chattering gibbons in the treetops had grown hushed at the sound of it. But here, in this new world, the strange waxy-white faces outside the bars only grew more numerous, and peered more intently, when he made his sound. Now, after three years, he seldom roared; and his old bewilderments were mostly resolved into a kind of dull uncarving.

Only rarely now — when the stridence of the uncomprehended voices grew too shrill to be endured, or the stench of the white bifurcated bodies too sour in his delicate cat's nostrils — did he come padding silently to the front of the cage and stand there staring out, a tumult of baffled fury in his heart.

II

He got his daily meat at half-past two. He had not liked it at first, had scarcely known that it was meat, this cold juiceless fiber with no smell and quiver of life in it. There was no spurt of scarlet blood when he tore at it with his teeth, no hot and salt-sweet trickle passing over his tongue as he licked and sucked at the torn flesh. When he pinned it to the floor with a great paw, as was his way with prey, it did not squirm or scream. But it did quiet the hurting hunger in his belly, that ache which once had sent him gliding stealthily through the tropical night, smelling the heavy jungle air and cocking his tawny head and listening; and so at last he came to accept it as his food, and to await its coming with a kind of lower-pitched rekindling of the old ecstasy that once had possessed him as he awaited, beside a water-hole, the coming of the little spotted deer.

By noon the fever would begin to infect him, and he would pad around his endless circle with a quicker pace, his long tail writhing and thrashing like a great furred snake, his claws involuntarily extruded a little from their sheaths and clicking against the floor. As the minutes passed he would move

faster and faster, and a fire of excitement would consume him, so that often as his frenzy grew he would void a jet of urine or a dropping of dung, and would not even heed the consequent rumble of sound which came from outside the bars and which he could not know was human laughter. And then suddenly he would hear, faint and far away, the clang and clatter of the hand-truck that meant the approaching of his meat. Silently he would pad to the bars and crouch down beside the little slot-like aperture through which, day after day, his meal was thrust to him. All his fury would have subsided now, giving place to a taut quiet, and he would crouch as motionless as stone.

He was crouching thus now. Intently, with unwinking eyes, he was watching while the truck was trundled to a halt outside his cage, and while the chunks of cold flesh were sorted over. Most especially he watched, in absorbed fascination, the white human hand and arm which performed these things. He did not know what it was, this curious five-pronged whitish thing that each day flickered just outside the slot of his cage for just a few seconds and then whisked away. More than a thousand times he had stared at it, rapt and uncom-

prehending. He watched it as a kitten watches a white butterfly, or as a sparrow studies a grub.

He watched it now as it pored over the meat, and then as it lifted a chunk and slid it through the slot. It was hovering inside the aperture for a second longer than usual. He reached out a paw, quickly as the dart of a cobra, and pinioned the white flesh with his claws. And, as his claws hooked into it, there reached his silky ears a sound which he had not heard for more than a thousand risings of the sun. It was the sound of screaming.

He put forth all his curved claws to their full length, and raked at the white skin. As he ripped at it, scarlet blood spurted in great jets against his muzzle, and the smell of hot blood was in his nostrils and his lungs. He took the quivering meat between his jaws, and the bones cracked and snapped, and on

his tongue was a warm salt-sweetness. There rushed into him a flooding exultation, and in an instant the world of the iron tree and the concrete kennel and the latticed bars was dissolved and vanished away. In his skull raced dim-formed remembrances, evocations of the flower-heavy sweetness of the jungle night, of the pattern of wild hog's tracks in an oozy stream-bank, of the chatter of finches when the sun was rising. His cage did not exist now, and there were no bars around him, or stained boards under his cushioned feet.

He had gone from there. He had re-entered into his ancient kingdom.

They drove him off, at last, with pitchforks and pointed iron rods. And early in the morning, before the zoo was opened to the public for the day, they put a bullet through his brain.



HOT-AIR CASTLES IN SPAIN

BY FLETCHER PRATT

WHEN the haze of the World War shimmered away with its stories of the *Kadaverfabrik* and crucified Canadians, the average American imagined he had learned something about the workings of propaganda and that it would not be easy to take him in again. But as things have turned out, he has not even passed the primer stage. Twenty years afterward we are enjoying the spectacle of another war — the Spanish conflict — in which what happens on the field is less important than what happens in tomorrow morning's newspaper and often bears little resemblance to it; in which the technical inventions which were supposed to insure the substitution of accurate news for the rumors of a bygone era have been employed only as guarantees for calculated mendacity; which has turned reporters into broadcasting stations for official communiqués; and which has even rendered it uncertain that dispatches signed by such correspondents represent either their opinions or knowledge.

In short, the Spanish Civil War is a war of propaganda, pure and not very simple. Both sides have been at it since the day in 1936 when Quiapo de Llano marched into Seville with 123 men, seized the radio station, and by broadcasting the news of an overwhelming victory persuaded the local authorities to surrender to him 1500 troops, an arsenal, and their own persons. In this war of ballyhoo, the "Loyalists" have been largely victorious (the very name applied to them by the American press demonstrates the fact); and they have gained their victory by being at once more reckless and more realistic than their opponents.

The Left-wingers have license for their methods; Lenin himself, the Great Red Father, left as the guiding principle of Communist press relations the maxim that "Truth is a bourgeois virtue" — which it is desirable to liquidate along with the other ideas of that decayed class. The Red side has thus been hampered by no necessity but that of producing a de-

sired reaction in the emotions of those who absorb its predigested "news". It can conceal unpleasant facts, manufacture agreeable fictions, invent documents, dilute fact with legend, even resort to murder of those who disclose inconvenient verities, so long as it be in the interest of the ultimate Social Good. In fact, it has done all these things. If a situation arose tomorrow in which one more horror story would throw the French and English democracies into armed intervention for the Valencia Government, the Reds would be perfectly capable of shedding gas bombs onto Madrid from the air in order to accuse Franco of the deed. The lives of any number of individuals are of no value compared to the achievement of a "constructive social purpose".

Franco's outfit, on the other hand, claims to represent the honest bourgeois citizen, and is restricted by bourgeois morality into at least lip-service to facts — "stubborn things", as Lenin called them. Like Rightists the world over, the Nationalists fail to understand the new propaganda game, in which nothing counts but results. Franco propaganda follows a pattern made familiar during the World War and repeated with minor variations since by various corporations

and individuals. Its usual line is the old one of emphasizing success and enemy atrocities, concealing defeat, and mobilizing God in a trench-helmet on the side of the righteous — a propaganda of half-truth and evasion, against which newspaper readers, and more to the point, newspaper writers, have long been inoculated. The Leftists' propaganda, with its juicy drama and appearance of candor, cannot but make the deeper impression, even on the observer who began by crying a murrain on both gangs of thugs.

The difference can be illustrated by the manner in which the two parties have handled the matter of shooting selected individuals against a wall. The Nationalists claim to have performed no such executions without fair public trials, and almost none, even then. The Left-wing apologists fearlessly admit there was no trial, or a trial of the most exiguous type, and rush on to describe the execution of a batch: "They gave the Fascist salute as the rifles were leveled."¹ The reader accepts the statement without a pause to inquire why Franco's men, who do not use the Fascist salute at any other time, should suddenly adopt

¹ *Single To Spain*, by Keith S. Watson. *Dutton*: New York.

it in the article of death. Thus the point the Reds were trying to put over—that the executed were guilty and that they were Fascists—is driven home.

The general issue involved here is not a light one. We in the United States have been under a good deal of pressure to lend our sympathies to both sides: to judge from the headlines and the organization of such groups as the Communist-sponsored Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Reds have won this part of their campaign. But this is only the preparation; at any moment, Italian intransigence, Russian provocation, a casual incident, is likely to let loose the torrent of the Second World War and we will fall under the most intense psychological compulsions to join what one disgruntled Trotskyite calls “a war that began for Socialism against capitalism, but has been made to appear by Stalinist propaganda as one for democracy against Fascism”.¹

Under the circumstances it seems worthwhile to examine some features of this Spanish conflict in the judicial spirit of a historian of, say, a hundred years hence, one who believes in that old-fashioned bourgeois virtue, truth; to see what

kind of war this is which we may be pushed into, and what kind of levers are being used to push us. The evidence is not so obscure as to be beyond analysis. There are, however, a good many stipulations; both parties in the struggle contain indigestible particularist elements subject to moments of irritation in which they let loose candid admissions against their bedfellows in the Cause; and the most adroit propagandist cannot in the long run demolish stubborn physical facts any more than the Reds have been able to get into Toledo by eleven times reporting it taken, twice in the presence of “eyewitness correspondents”.

II

Any such examination must begin with a dictionary and a rumor. Thirty-one parties participated in the Spanish election of February, 1936, with all those Left of the Center forming a Popular Front in imitation of the successful French Leftist maneuver of 1932. This Popular Front comprised the Republicans, a New Dealish outfit; Left Republicans, lunatic fringe of the same; Socialists; UGT, the giant trade-union whose voting opinions seem to have been Left Socialist, but whose secretariat and

¹ *Facts About Spain*, by Anita Brenner. *Modern Monthly*, September, 1937.

executives were in the hands of the Communist Party; POUM, the numerically small but active Trotskyite Fourth International Communist group; and CNT, the other big union, a Syndicalist group, largely in Catalonia and allied with the Separatists and dominated by the Anarchists, as the UGT was by the Communists.

Under the electoral system, a candidate receiving an absolute majority in his district was elected forthwith; if there was no majority the office went to the man with the highest plurality in a second election a week or ten days after the first. As nearly all parties had candidates in every constituency, first-round majorities were rare. In the run-off, only the Popular Front man who had the highest vote of any in his group of parties remained; the rest quit, leaving the voters at the second election to choose between one Popular Front candidate and half a dozen different shades from Center to Right. Except in Catalonia, the Popular Front never had anything but a minority; yet except in Castile and the extreme south, it everywhere elected its candidates. The figures, from a Red source which may not be altogether accurate, were 4,206,156 votes for Popular Front candidates, 681,047 for Centrists, 3,783,-

601 for Rightists. A subsequent compilation calculates that as the Republicans and several Right Socialist groups were shoved out of the government formed, it represented only 2,800,000 voters of the total electorate. At all events, the seats in the Cortes were for the Popular Front, 258, for the Center, 62, and for the Right, 152. In other words, the result was not unlike that following the American election of 1860, when a minority of voters gained control of the federal government, creating a situation which produced the same crisis in the United States as was to follow in Spain. And, fundamentally, for much the same reason: the losing party believed the winners pledged to strong measures. Yet here the analogy deserts us, and in deserting us, reveals how much the Spanish struggle is one of propaganda.

No unreconstructed Confederate ever accused the Lincoln government of plotting the mass assassination of Southern leaders. But the Spanish Rebels have produced documents, particularly the famous *Confidential Report No. 3*, in support of their claim that a Fascist rising was to be simulated by the Reds, followed by a general strike, the seizure of barracks by armed "workers" who were really Red Guards, the shooting of of-

ficers, and a régime of mass-terror; they assert that the upheaval was arranged at a meeting in Valencia attended by Thorez, leader of French Communism, and Lomoviov and Tourochov from Soviet Russia. The Reds retort that the documents are faked. They may well be, for they contain no details, such as indisputably genuine signatures.

But the Reds go further, to declare that the outbreak of a long-hatched Fascist plot was imminent, and in support of this, offer the fact that the revolt broke out in many places at the same time. The facts admitted by both sides are that tempers everywhere were at the flash-point; that the new government had just been constituted, with Azaña, a moderate Socialist, at its head; that he had made no secret of his intention of purging the army of Rightist officers; that many of his more extreme supporters expected this purge to prove a bloody business; that for several months Spain had suffered riots, and a cramped economic life; and that Calvo Sotelo, Rightist leader, was assassinated. The rebellion started in less than a week, usually at army barracks.

The intensity of the explosion appears to have caught the Red leaders by surprise. "There was no

central government at all for two days",¹ says one Leftist source, only local committees of public safety which began with assaults on the foci of the revolt in the barracks and turned to terroristic executions of possible Right-wing partisans, army officers, priests, rich men, bourgeois. How many persons they disposed of in this manner is uncertain: the 1937 pastoral of the Spanish bishops claims 300,000, and other Right sources 500,000; but this is propaganda, and the admission of the Red delegate at the League of Nations says noncommittally "several thousands". We would know even less about it but for the subsequent wrangle between the Catalanian Anarchists and the Madrid Communist junto, in which each party accused the other of driving the Republicans and Right Socialists, the intellectually strongest element of the Popular Front, into the Franco camp.

The parties to this wrangle have conducted it behind the locked doors of the Red special press, and it is a fine illustration of the relative inefficiency of the Rightist propagandists that they have made nothing either of the Communist accusation that the Anarchists have shot "several thousand" persons

¹ Brenner; *op. cit.*

just to see the blood run, or of the Anarchist counterblast that the Communists have adopted the Stalin technique of liquidating everyone who does not adhere strictly to the Party Line.

This is the more remarkable since Franco's press agents have had before them since early in the war a perfect example of how to put over an atrocity story. The case is that of the "massacre" in the Badajoz bull-ring, which has been so often repeated that "it is now accepted as historical fact".¹ On August 18, the day after the Rebels captured Badajoz, there appeared in the newspapers a story over the signature of N. Reynolds Packard, United Press correspondent, describing his entry into the town with Franco's army, and how he had seen two or three thousand bodies in the bull-ring, where the Red prisoners were confined until the Rebels could find time to turn machine-guns on them from the arena seats.

It was not until much later that an indignant Mr. Packard, cut off from seeing newspapers for some time, wanted to know what story had been attributed to him. They sent him copies; he replied that he had never written or filed such a

piece of news, and at the time of Franco's capture of Badajoz he had been in Portugal.² On the other hand, *L'Humanité*, the French Communist organ, carried a story of a Rebel massacre at Badajoz two days before the city was captured by Franco.

Put these facts together; the result is a picture of someone — anyone — handing to a telegrapher a dispatch to the United Press, a dispatch amplifying with realistic detail the massacre story that had previously appeared in the official Communist paper. The source of the dispatch must be obvious. The points for Americans to note are three: first, that the new Leftist propaganda is not the cold statistical stuff of former days; second, that we do not know and shall not know for years whether there was really a Badajoz massacre; and third, that even the signed dispatches of supposedly impartial correspondents cannot be accepted as authentic.

In fact, under the conditions of modern propaganda war, no reporter behind the lines can afford to be anything but partisan. "Is yours a Popular Front paper?" William P. Carney of the *New York Times* was asked in Madrid

¹ *The War in Spain*, by Louis Fischer. *The Nation*: New York.

² *The Siege of Alcazar*, by Geoffrey McNeill-Moss. *Knopf*: New York.

before they gave him even the canned-meat type of news handed out by the official agencies. And there is another incident reported in *Single to Spain*.

"I suppose you're going to meet Delmer," says one of the local boys, referring to an English correspondent.

"What of it?"

"If you don't know, you ought to — he's a bloody Nazi."

Now Delmer's Nazi-ism, as subsequently revealed, consisted in that Hitler had once shaken hands with him, before he had been booted out of Germany for not having seen facts eye-to-eye with Herr Göbbels. But he was not a Communist either, and in the eyes of the Reds there is no middle ground. Watson also tells how much the other correspondents liked Jack Minifie, the *Herald-Tribune* correspondent — the same Minifie who in April, 1937, wired his paper that "the Anarchists did outstanding work" the previous July, when they were killing "several thousand" suspected Rightists in the streets.

The sum of this is that the Reds have conferred upon newspapermen a quasi-diplomatic status, demanding that the slant given to news from their centers accord with their own ideas. It is interest-

ing to note that when the Socialist-UGT government of Azaña was replaced by the more violent one of Largo Caballero, there was a general reshuffling of foreign correspondents in Red territory, and when Caballero "wavered in his relationship to Russia, began to manifest open hostility towards Communism and a tendency to check the growth of its influence"¹ in favor of the Anarchists and POUM, there was another housecleaning. It is not necessary to believe that the incoming gang of Leftists asked that the changes be made. The new propagandists possess a technique far more subtle; they simply see to it that the representatives of their viewpoint get good stories and get them first.

This is perhaps natural and to be expected under war conditions. The new thing in the Spanish propaganda war is that we find it for the first time reduced to a system, and for the first time we find the correspondents deprived of their only weapon of silence, being forced to send propaganda only tintured with fact.

III

Since the war began, genuine journalistic scoops, in the sense that

¹ *The New Statesman and Nation*: London.

the reporters uncovered facts adverse to the side to which they were accredited, have been exactly two, and the results in these two cases have been instructive in the methods of the propaganda war. One was New York *Times*' correspondent Carney's splurge when he reached Paris, after having for five months sent from Madrid dispatches full of sweetness and light. He declared that he had not for his life dared send anything else; that democracy was non-existent in Red Spain; that every shade of opinion but the most fanatical Communism was outlawed, and that executions without trial were a commonplace, furnishing names, dates, instances.

The Leftists replied to this attack on their fundamental theory of the war—that they were defending democracy against Franco's Fascism—by repeating through a thousand mouths that they *were* democratic, Franco a Fascist, and Carney a liar. The *Times* man was, after all, a single individual; the Reds saw to it that no more such individuals reached positions behind their lines where they could support Carney's testimony, and by repetition of a type familiar in the advertising world, practically overbore all opposition to their view. That is, opposition

in the press of the democratic countries, where the true battle was taking place.

Unfortunately for the Valencia propagandists, there was a split in their ranks when Largo Caballero fell and the boys began to sling mud. The Stalinist apologist, Louis Fischer, getting off a few observations like "Russia's pro-Loyalist activity in Spain partakes of the nature of war prevention", has accused the Anarchists and POUM of being careless about whom they admitted to membership (thereby unreasonably broadening the basis of the dictatorship); of a semi-organized effort to wipe out the bourgeoisie, in the course of which the Catalonian Socialist leaders themselves were shot; of alienating the support of democratic elements in Spain through irresponsible violence; and finally of alienating the support of English democracy through confiscating foreign property.

The Anarchist side retorts that they do not wish to be connected with democracy at home or abroad; that the Spanish Communists were democratic only in the beginning when they formed a cabinet in co-operation with other groups, then liquidated the leaders of one group after another; that the Valencia government is ac-

tually in the hands of delegates from Stalin's Russia who use it to grind Russia's private political ax by working up democratic support for an ultimate Russian imperialist war against Hitler; and that the present government represents something like five per cent of the population.

Lastly, they have given to the world the Decree of June 23, 1937, against espionage. Under it, in Loyalist Spain "a man may be shot for acts of omission, and the only provision made for release is on the condition of confession. The decree defines sedition sweepingly so that any opinion, spoken or written, or thought to be held by circumstantial evidence, which may be construed as critical of the government, constitutes treason. It is possible to condemn to death a soldier who tells his comrade that the stew is bad. A strike may be outlawed and the strikers punished with execution. The tribunal that tries cases under this decree is appointed by the cabinet (*i.e.*, the Communists) and the trials are secret."¹

The interesting points about this battle of billingsgate between the Red factions are that neither side denies the other's accusations (both indeed, accept them and wear them

as badges of honor!) and that both confirm Carney. But the wrangle has been confined to the limits of the Leftist press and overlaid with dreary discussions of Marxian dialectic. For public consumption, Anarchists and Communists continue to be a unit in insisting that Carney was a liar and that they are "fighting for democracy".

The other newspaper coup was the announcement from Seville one month after the revolt broke out that twenty-six Italian and German airplanes had arrived to help Franco.² The Nationalist press-agents were so slow to recognize this as a stroke in the propaganda war that, like the Germans with the shooting of Nurse Cavell, they let the victory go by default. That piece of news has conditioned almost every other feature of the propaganda war. It is noteworthy that the Stalin Communists, the wing of the Popular Front which has been bidding for the support of the democracies, is the one which has most consistently emphasized the connection between Italy, Germany, and Franco, of which the airplane business was the beginning. The POUM has soft-pedaled the matter, and has even sought to establish an obreptitious liaison between

¹ Brenner, *op. cit.*

² New York Times.

Mussolini and the Stalinists. This charge is particularly interesting, for it shows the POUM does not consider it strange that Stalin should send Russians to be killed on one side in "the nature of war-prevention" while actually working hand-in-glove with Mussolini on the other.

In this light, the physical war in Spain may be viewed as a local European political quarrel, with the sides divided about as they were in 1913 and with the strategic Balearics the prize. "Democracy" is nothing but a propaganda word, a booby-trap for gullible Anglo-Saxons. Even Franco has been using it. Yet the newspapermen, who cannot be altogether ignorant of the true character of the struggle, have so consistently leaned Leftward both in their reporting and in that form of criticism which consists in choosing which item shall be given the greater prominence in the newspapers, that one is forced to admit some validity in the Red thesis of a "war for democracy" unless a better explanation can be found.

IV

There is such an explanation; it is both emotional and economic.

Malcolm Cowley of the *New Republic*, a recent and Radical visitor to Spain, tips the emotional side of the matter when speaking of a conversation with other journalists in a Barcelona café. "Madrid is too orderly," said one to him. "It is entirely devoted to winning the war. But here in Barcelona you can always be sure of trouble. It is *formidable, épatant*." And up spoke another. "Visit the villages of Aragon. I was at one where they had abolished money. In another, they had divided their possessions and spoke of returning to the Golden Age. It is quite crazy and I love it."

Watson saw just such a conversation interrupted by a shot; a man collapsed across a table near the door. "Fascist spy," coolly remarked the red-and-black-scarfed Anarchist militiaman who had fired, as he put away his gun. And the correspondents loved that, too.

In other words, the Reds offer adventure and excitement to the *n*th degree, an escape from old routines into a dazzling Utopia where everyone experiments freely in new methods of solving the problems of the ages. It is not without significance that nearly every observer remarks on the youthfulness of the rank-and-file in the Red armies, and the fact that a number

of not-unpersonable gals carry rifles with the men.

Nor can even the most hard-boiled correspondent fail to be impressed by the apparent democracy in the Valencia forces when he sees officers messing with men, and in all but tactical matters accepting the supervision of a civilian or non-com “political leader”. If you told these correspondents that it is merely a question of titles—that the “political leaders” exert all real power as the agents of a narrow and absolute oligarchy, just as similar political leaders did in the armies of the French Revolutionary Terror—they would merely smile at you. All they can see is the world turned upside down; it’s quite crazy and they love it.

By contrast with this heady brew, the Franco people offer nothing but the small beer of a daily life not greatly different from that with which every correspondent is familiar. They are forced to plump for tiresome duties while the Left-wing is offering an escape into Wonderland. This extends to, and is symbolized by, the press releases from the opposing headquarters. When Franco gives out sober statistics to show that 100 Nationalist pesetas will buy 160 francs, while the same number of Red pesetas will buy only 40, the Reds reply

that they have abolished money in some of their towns. Which statement is likely to get the more attention?

But it is not wholly an emotional question. Behind the Red lines the correspondent is always sure of finding a good story. It may be a fake, but that need not matter. If he cables the tale as he receives it, every resource of the most adroit publicity bureau in the world will be devoted to backing him—*vide* Guernica and the “Badajoz massacre”. Only through some such accident as the Communist-Anarchist quarrel will he be called into question. On the Rebel side he can get little but statistics, atrocity stories which were already hackneyed in 1915, and photographs which will be marked “too gruesome” by the art editor. In other words, the correspondent who plays the Reds’ game gets the support of a powerful organization; the correspondent who favors Franco, or tries to remain neutral, has to work for himself, with that organization against him.

This explains why the Red conquest of the press agencies has been so much more complete than the Red conquest of Spain. There are, it is true, some signs of change. Since the Stalin Communists got into the saddle with their policy of

"Win the war first — then the revolution", and their orders not to frighten the democracies with too-rapid steps toward Utopia, they have shown a tendency to clamp down on such charming eccentricities as abolishing money and blowing the heads off casual strangers because they look like Fascist spies. The Anarchists complain bitterly that the Mayor of Puig-Cerdá was shot merely because he collectivized everything in the city, including a considerable amount of British property. This would appear to indicate more intensive efforts by the Stalin branch to woo the democracies, and we shall doubtless soon be hearing of how safe they have made life from irresponsible violence.

But like everything else in this war, it will be propaganda. Perhaps one should say "like everything else in modern war", for we seem to be getting approximately the same dose from that other war

now underway on the shores of the Yellow Sea. Already most of our newspapers have been persuaded into taking sides; already there has been a flood of the same propaganda, varying only in detail. We have seen a picture of a Japanese soldier taking bayonet practice on a Chinese corpse, which turned out to be posed by a couple of Chinese; we have had a story of the bombing of the "Central Rockefeller Hospital" at Nanking with the deaths of 150 civilian patients, anent which the Rockefeller Foundation remarked that there was no "Central Rockefeller Hospital" at Nanking and no patients had been killed. And as we have been shoved toward helping the "democratic" Spanish Reds, so now we are being pushed to help the "peaceful" Chinese. The only defense is to recognize this new type of war for what it is — and to wait twenty-five years for the truth before taking sides.



SHE DIED YOUNG

A Story

BY ALIS DE SOLA

THE waiter knows. I know he knows. He has an unerring eye and a sort of crude dramatic instinct. One look at us and he's ready for his new role, the tactful friend at the funeral. . . . The way he pulls out our chairs, a little more slowly than usual, a sympathetic pat on each mahogany back. "Ah," he's thinking regretfully, since after all we've been good customers, "they will not come here together again. M'sieu perhaps, and Mademoiselle perhaps, but not together. Never together again." I hate him; I'd like to pound that knowing French face of his into jelly.

It was different in the beginning. The great room gay with people, somebody touching my arm. "Miss Greentree, Mr. Fletcher. . . . Miss Greentree's from Alabama, Tom." We looked at each other and it was the first time, the first time! Your eyes gave me back to myself — precious suddenly the small pale face and tarnished hair. We

didn't speak, we couldn't. The music started and still we stood there silent. Almost wearily then, as though you knew it was a fateful gesture, you opened your arms and we danced. The minute our bodies came together I thought this is right, this is the way things should be, except it's a nuisance having clothes on.

Later you brought me here, and again I thought how right this is. The closed-in tables, the red glow of the papering and upholstery, the funny black-and-white sketches on the wall, all so warm and intimate, so made for lovers. Because of course we were going to be lovers. You knew it and I knew it and the waiter knew it. He hovered over us, his bland smile arch and encouraging, his hands a sly benediction. Not that we needed any help. Tom, Tom, the banker's son, and Isabel, the daffy colonel's dizzy daughter, plunged headlong into love. . . . I looked beautiful, all the lights on and the love-

motif from *Tristan* crashing from the grand piano. You have to admit it was damned exciting.

It was that way all along. Not safe, not comfortable, exciting. Even now — our elbows just touched as we came in the door but fire licked up and down our arms, and your fingers when they clutched mine were hot. You pulled them away very quickly; the whole thing makes you angry now. You rather wish it had always made you angry, then you wouldn't be in such a confounded mess. You could go ahead and marry the cool girl they've chosen for you, and life would stretch out easy and predictable again. Only this one obstacle between you and the placid future, this fragile obstacle ringed with fire.

Well, my darling, all your troubles are over. "I want to see you," I said when I called up this morning, "I've something important to tell you." You agreed reluctantly, you'd much rather not have come. But you won't regret it, I promise you that, you'll be stinking glad when I tell you. . . . I'm getting out. A strategic retreat, the Colonel would call it, getting out before you're kicked out. Back to Alabama and the old homestead for me.

I'm there now, I can see it. Thin

distinguished columns holding up the family pride. The guarded glances, the whispers: "Such a pity, one of our very best families, one hates to see them peter away like that. . . . Poor Colonel Greentree, really a brilliant man, on the Staff in Washington for years. He's never been the same since they retired him. Plays with toy soldiers, you know, that sort of thing. His sister's always been a bit eccentric, of course. . . . And now the girl's coming back. She went to New York to study music, but. . . . What she'll do with herself, heaven only knows." Heaven may know. I don't. We can't even keep the piano in tune. Termites or something are eating away the keys.

You get the picture, don't you? A Stark Young design with morbid trimmings by Faulkner. Still, no doubt about it, home's the place for the last of the Greentrees. "A pretty talent, my dear, but your hands are too small. You can't be a pianist with those hands." *That* was settled months ago and I guess I can stand it. I can stand practically anything now.

II

I wish the waiter would stop breathing down my neck. I don't like him any more, I don't like

him at all. He's too damn solicitous for my taste. "And what will Mademoiselle have tonight?" he's asking in his smooth insinuating voice. Mademoiselle will have wormwood and hemlock with a dash of bitters, thank you. . . . Yes, Tommy, I'd be delighted to have you do the ordering. You're so accomplished at that sort of thing.

"Two Daiquiris," you say, lingering over the lovely syllables, bright as parrakeets' tails. "Very dry, as usual." *As usual. As usual? As usual!* Oh, all right.

What? Oh yes, yes indeed, do order the dinner now too. That's an excellent idea, that will keep you pleasantly occupied while I indulge in a little private earthquake. Things are jiggling around inside me in the most extraordinary fashion and my tongue's lying limp and heavy in the bottom of my mouth. . . . Words are deadly weapons, aren't they, words are dynamite and guns. . . . Good Lord, that brackish and salty flood, what's *that*? Oh, to be sure, nothing but a touch of nausea. How odd — it has the taste of tears. . . . Hold on, my girl, hold on! You don't want to fall off the chair, do you? That *would* be a pretty sight — Isabel Greentree, of the Alabama Greentrees, suh! flat on

her face on the floor of a fashionable restaurant.

The Colonel's coming to the rescue. He's shouting inside my head, he always speaks to me as though I were a regiment instead of merely his daughter. "Retreat if necessary, but retreat in order. Panic is inexcusable." That's fine, Colonel, that's a swell motto for a girl with a breaking heart. Any more of them tucked away in your distinguished skull? . . . Hello! here's Aunt Cecelia, too. She looks quietly pained, she thinks I've forgotten I'm a lady. That isn't true — it just slipped my mind for the moment. I'm all right now, I'll prove I am. Look! My muscles obey me, my mouth is curving upwards in a smile.

"Well, Isabel," you say and "Well?" I answer, my tone a little rasping still, but steady, the pitch true. They're with me here, the soldier and the lady, tall thin columns holding up the family pride. My schooled face baffles you. You can't quite figure me out, you're inclined to feel apprehensive. Wondering what I have to tell you, wishing I'd spit it out and get it over with so you can enjoy your dinner in peace. All in good time, my darling, I'm not ready yet, and meanwhile I'm not bad to look at with the smile curving my lips.

Very well, you think, it's an ordinary occasion, "Here we are again." A broad cheerful remark, familiar as the knives and forks on the tablecloth. My smile is cracking, it explodes into laughter. Laughter seizes me by the throat and strains my ribs.

And now you're bewildered, you're shaking your head at me reproachfully. It's a charming head, smooth and brown, with drowsy eyes and such a sweet stupid mouth. I'd dance for your head any day, Tommy, I'd dance wildly if they'd only bring it to me on a platter. Bloody and dear and all mine at last, that would be a prize worth dancing for. . . . I guess I'm going crazy, certainly the waiter seems to think so. He hasn't expected laughter. I've put something over on him.

Our glasses are raised. You want to know what we should drink to? To love, of course, and death, the *Liebestod*, the little death. This is our last night, darling, and if God had a grain of pity, he'd let me die in your arms. "To cease upon the midnight with no pain." Forever and ever no pain! . . . The drink helped. We're leaning towards each other, we're lighting a bonfire with our eyes. Life's a shocking business, maybe, and being young's the very devil, but here and

now I swear it—it's good to be alive and young.

A black sleeve between us, outer darkness chilling the flesh. Did you have to order oysters, were they absolutely essential? Ugh! Soft and cold and yielding. She'll be like that, the girl you're going to marry. Will you be content, I wonder, or will you stretch out fingers desperate for the dry crackling flames?

She'll walk up the aisle with her frozen-angel face. She'll place her plump cool hand submissively in yours. God smiles upon *this* merger; it will be signed, sealed and witnessed in his house. . . . Sorry, what did you say? I suppose I *have* been dreaming, a pretty nasty sort of nightmare, too. Yes, the waiter can take my plate away, I don't care for any more, I seem to have lost my taste for oysters. What's this he's putting in front of me with such an eager ingratiating air? Roast quail, no less, very dainty in its bed of vegetables. You've certainly done yourself proud on the dinner, Tommy, it's a pity I have no appetite. I feel curiously relaxed and spent, almost as though I could cry. The tears would fall, drop after salty drop, they would add their harsh seasoning to the perfectly cooked quail. It wouldn't taste nice then,

its flavor would be quite spoiled.

Don't look so worried and impatient, darling, I shan't let anything of the sort happen. Instead I shall pick up my knife and fork and hack away politely and go through all the motions of enjoying this truly delicious bird. . . . Oh! Oh, I see. Yes, I really do have something important to tell you, it wasn't just a dodge. . . . I don't understand. Why should I be interested in doctors, what could a doctor do for me? . . . Ohhh! So *that's* what you've been thinking. No, my dear, nothing so vulgar. Trust a Greentree to avoid embarrassing predicaments. Besides, we're a dying family. Never more than two children in recent generations, no matter how hard we tried.

I agree, that little error of yours deserves a good laugh. Terribly amusing, yes indeed! How buoyant you've become, how ripe with friendliness. I'm a pretty swell gal after all, aren't I? So nice of me not to trip you up. Well, in a minute or two, when you hear what I've got to tell you, you'll want to pin a medal on me. We go in for medals in my family.

A minute or two because the waiter's here again. His trained precise hands are clearing the table, he is bland and familiar and a

friend. Linger, *mon ami*, be slow and thorough, don't let a single crumb escape your fastidious eye. . . . No dessert, thanks, just coffee. I'm not in the mood for sweets.

I'm telling you now. I'm explaining in a carefully casual voice that I'm going home to Alabama, that my trunks are packed and my ticket bought for tomorrow's train. My eyes are averted, I'm desperately afraid of your candid face. What if I should risk a glance and find it flooded with relief, relief obliterating all memory of me and love? Oh Tommy, Tommy, Tommy! Give me the tribute of a moment's pain. After I'm gone you can be happy, you can marry the girl they've chosen for you, you can be safe and comfortable and easy for the rest of your days. But now I want you to remember how, often and often, my hair lay gold in the hollow place between your shoulder and your chest. I want you to remember how flame devoured our bodies till we sank gray as ashes into a profound and dreamless sleep.

You're impeccably kind. You murmur that you're sorry, that you'll miss me, and there's a nice troubled note in your agreeable voice. I dare to meet your eyes. They're kind, troubled, drowsy, they show neither pain nor relief.

(How many times I've kissed those drowsy lids and beaten down the thick lashes with my mouth!) You're stupid, of course, I'd forgotten that. Words carry no freight of emotion to you, they're powerless to delight or stab. Some night, perhaps, unquiet in the dark, your arms will reach for me and find me gone. You'll know torture then, you'll toss comfortless while the storm of desire rages. Until that moment I shall be unmourned.

III

Politeness is a vice; it degrades the truth. You babble agreeably about sunshine. It will be pleasant for me, you think, to go South and escape this wretched weather. . . . Shut up, you fool! There's not enough heat in the sun. There will never be heat enough anywhere as the miles lengthen between us and I see the thin columns once more.

So reticent they are, those columns, so distinguished, so helpless against the pushing vines. The vines have nature behind them, they creep with ardor, they have almost overwhelmed the thin fine skeleton of the house. Ghosts dwell in that house, functionless abstractions, the terribly lucid symbols of an idea that failed. . . . The bench of the grand piano is empty. I

shall sit there, my tarnished hair dim in the twilight. I shall play little airs from Mozart because Aunt Cecelia approves of him, he is so gracious and serene. Have you ever played Mozart on a piano that's out of tune? It sounds screwy as hell.

That guilty tone. What does it mean? What are you trying to tell me? Our last night, you wish you'd known. . . . Oh no, no, no, no, *no*! What if you did make another engagement? You can get out of it, can't you? You can say your old life isn't quite finished yet, that it's got a lot of dangling ends. You can say you're using them to tie up something broken that's being shipped to Alabama in the morning. The night is hardly long enough for all you have to do. . . . Oh! So you've strained a point already by taking me to dinner. You'd promised to have it elsewhere, had you? Elsewhere, huh! We know what that means, you and I. Well, I'm sorry for you, it must have been pretty embarrassing all around. "Excuse me while I see if the lady I've been spending my nights with needs a doctor." . . . Damn you, stop staring at me with those obstinate mild eyes!

Thank God for coffee, the bitter strength of it, the heat. There's

nothing quite like it, I shall undoubtedly take a second cup. The waiter is generous, he has seen my need and left the silver pot within easy reach.

Incredibly, this is I. This is my hand reaching out and seizing your wrist, my head tilted with deliberate allure. The icy darkness is dissipated, everywhere is the flicker of flame. Your face is colored by it, the deep red blooms in your cheeks. Rare and beautiful, that blossoming of the dull flesh. Enchantment holds me. I am quiet in my love.

Magic is strong but caution is stronger. Almost we met in a kiss. But you wrenched your hand away, you broke the powerful current, and ice is closing in on us again. I understand. Perhaps you're wise. Much better not to fool with this sort of thing, you might find you still had a taste for it. The blood's treacherous, and nature has

her own rough witticisms. They're out of place in an ordered life.

Why are you angry? I accept defeat. I shall not again strike stone on stone for a chance miraculous spark. Anger mounts in your face, the features tighten ominously. I am assailed by a storm of words. Your angry words are bullets, swift, hard as steel, cold. But they spatter wildly, your aim's too unsteady, I'm afraid you weren't meant to be a gunman. Ugly? Cheap? Disgusting? You're speaking of fire, my dear. No, I am not ashamed.

A cigarette? Please, I'd like one very much. It's all over now, is it? You regret your outburst, an unfortunate loss of temper. You didn't mean a thing by it. . . . Upset? Oh no. No. Not at all. You want to know why I've gone all dreamy again? Well, I've been thinking about Alabama. It's a good place for a corpse.



THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

When Is a Murderer?

MY RECENT meditations on the state of the Union have led me to believe that the country sorely needs a formal statute of limitations on recognized murderers. I would not know how to draft one, nor could I supply the requisite data for the purpose. I am not a man of precision, like Mr. Stuart Chase or Mr. George Soule, who can get a clean-cut formula out of the most formidable mess of statistics as handily as a dairy-farmer makes a refractory cow "give down". In fact, my ideas on the subject are exceedingly vague. Like the good hundred-per-cent American which I am, I have no doubt that something ought to be done; but just what and how and by whom, I don't know. All I can do is to talk a little about the matter in my bald disjointed way which gives offense to so many—they little know what it is to be born artless—in the hope that some one like Mr. Chase or Mr. Soule will go through it with the stringency of a true social philosopher, and make something respectable of it.

In recent years, when certain men made their appearance on the public stage, I saw that almost universally my countrymen put them down as murderers and desperadoes, and held them in horror and detestation. So did I, for the case seemed clear; there could be no doubt of it. Time went on—I still holding that opinion rather naïvely, as it turned out—and I presently saw with pain and mortification that my countrymen had changed their opinion entirely and left me in the lurch. Apparently something had taken place which had transmogrified these assassins into pretty good fellows. I could not make out what it was, nor could anyone tell me, and my best efforts to discover it only left me in an exhausted and ignorant state.

M. Mussolini is a case in point. At the time of the Matteotti affair most Americans were freely and loudly vocal about his being a cut-throat in the good old tradition of the Mafia. Well, why not? Later on, however, it seemed that he must have had a change of heart,

for he stood before those same Americans quite absolved. I saw nothing which indicated a change of heart, however, nor do I now. His good works certainly bear no testimony to it. I hear that the Italian trains now run on time and that Naples does not smell so bad as it used to, but achievements like these do not attest anything about the moral character of the person responsible for them. I have tried my best to think of something that might have happened to moderate American opinion of M. Mussolini, but I can turn up only one which could be suggested as a possibility—the mere lapse of time. Is this all there is to it? If so, shifting the question away from M. Mussolini, and putting it in general terms, how much time does this sort of transformation take, on the average? At what rate per annum may a common cutthroat and plug-ugly be expected to metagabolize himself into an honored and respectable member of the human family, all things considered?

Something like this is what I would like to have a competent person work out; something which could be embodied in the statute of limitations, to show definitely when the statute might be expected to go into effect. In the first place, such a formula would save a good

many innocent and single-minded readers of THE MERCURY the embarrassment which I suffered in the instance just mentioned; the most dreadful embarrassment of suddenly discovering that they are no longer thinking with the mind of the herd or speaking with its voice. Moreover, it would keep writers like myself in touch with the times, for the benefit of their readers. In the days when the game-law was still out on M. Mussolini, for instance, how advantageous it would have been if I could have given warning through THE MERCURY that the closed season would be on in, say, another six months, and that we must all begin to revise our opinions accordingly, in order to keep up our character as good sound herd-conscious and herd-minded Americans!

In fact, it was the American adventures of M. Mussolini's son Bruno which made me see how urgent is the need for some such formula as Mr. Chase or Mr. Soule might give us. Young Bruno, it appears, was a bomber in Ethiopia with a very good bag to his credit, largely of women and children. The report is also that he has a literary flair, and had published something which dealt learnedly with the most up-to-date tech-

nique of busting pickaninnies from heights above bow-and-arrow range. Then he came to America, where he encountered a most unappreciative public. I was not on the spot, and am taking all this at second hand, but the press-accounts say that the White House was memorialized against receiving him, also that wherever he went he was assailed and bedeviled by pickets, mobsters, anti-Fascists, and assorted demonstrators of all kinds, so that finally he had to be chaperoned around by strong-arm men; and all in all, it would seem that he had a brisk and stirring time.

Now, clearly, public opinion regarded young Bruno as a murderer of a peculiarly mean and low type. I believe it still so regards him. But suppose (for observers of public affairs have to take all sorts of chances into consideration), suppose he should some day succeed his father, or even suppose he should be plumped into a less conspicuous job, and suppose in that capacity he should visit this country again. If he came before the statute of limitations took effect, he would be greeted with the bum's rush, as he was the other day; if after, he would receive a salute of the right number of guns as he came up the bay, and would be welcomed with all the amenities

prescribed for an upright and virtuous statesman. Obviously, then, it is important to have some great actuarial genius go into the matter and tell us when the statute of limitations may be expected to become operative in the case of young Bruno.

There are many eminent possibilities of this kind before us at the moment, and it would be a great satisfaction to have them impartially and scientifically examined by some one in whom we all have confidence, like Mr. Chase or Mr. Soule. On the strength of the pogroms, for instance, and especially the "blood-purge", Herr Hitler is very generally regarded as a fearful fellow in the murdering line, which it quite seems he must be. If he came here now, I would not give more for his chances than I would for young Bruno's. But good heavens! I remember when all America was red-hot for hanging the Kaiser. For once I did not share my countrymen's enthusiasm, not because I knew so much about the Kaiser, for I did not, but because I knew plenty about the political higher-ups in this country who were fomenting the popular mania—so much did I know, indeed, that I would not believe a word they said about anything or anybody under any circumstances. All

America, however, regarded the Kaiser as a murderous villain; but at present, when anyone thinks of him at all, he seems to be thought of as a harmless and rather decent old dud, whom no one would care about hurting.

Now, while Hitler is no doubt our current fiend in human form, one can see plainly that if he holds his job he is headed straight for the kind of plenary absolution which we have accorded to M. Mussolini; and if he does not hold it, he is headed for the kind accorded to the Kaiser. Well, let us have full scientific data on the process, and a formula by which we may know precisely when we may expect to see Herr Hitler's wings sprouting. Then there is our fine old friend M. Stalin, who is probably responsible for more murders (outside actual warfare) than anyone now alive. I read a note in the *London Times* a few days ago, quoting an estimate of 10,000 cleaned up in the current "purge". It seems a good many. I cannot see, however, that American public opinion is much worked up about it; though if Hitler, why not Stalin; or, again, why make fish of bombing Ethiopians, and flesh of liquidating kulaks? Yet we surely cannot all have forgotten how tremendously our pub-

lic was worked up over the enormities of Bolshevism only so few years ago. Surely we remember the deportations, the innumerable Red raids, the sweet-scented pecksniffery of Mr. Secretary Hughes, and all the blatant silliness served up by the newspapers throughout the post-war period. I, for one, have good reason to remember those days, because I almost got into trouble once for casually saying no more than that I thought the Bolshevik régime was there to stay — I, who have not, and never did have, any more sympathy with Bolshevism than I have with the New Deal.

Yet if Stalin came to the United States tomorrow, would our populace rise up against him as an arch-criminal? I doubt it. Somehow the statute of limitations has interposed, as it has in the case of Mussolini. Hence it appears that at the present time the game-law is still out on Hitler and out on Bruno, but the season is closed on Stalin and on Bruno's dad. One would think there must be some sort of pattern for the process by which these very remarkable and interesting effects are produced, and I now turn my desultory observations over to abler minds in the hope that they will find it.

THE LIBRARY

*The Cure For Alcoholism*¹

By JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

IT is not known at what period the children of men learned to ferment the juices of the grape, or just when, in our tedious struggle upwards from the paleolithic ooze, man's questing spirit discovered that certain grains and vegetables, decomposed and subjected to exact conditions of heat and moisture, yield distillations possessing features of unusual interest. The race had its beverages with it when it emerged into recorded times. They drank beer under the Pharaohs and in the Sumerian civilization, as is attested by hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions surviving from those ancient lands; and beer is today the drink of the African primitives. In the ruins of Cnosus, huge amphorae and impressive craters indicate the use of wine, and Homer's Archaens were a definitely boozy lot. The Athenians of the Golden Age were two-handed drinkers, and indeed, much of the

trouble that destroyed the gifted Alcibiades seems to have proceeded from the circumstance that he never learned to put water in his likker. Philip of Macedon, one of the great men of the older earth, overshadowed only by his mighty son, enjoyed gigantic sprees: Alexander's biting taunt at one of them is written down: "Look at the man who proposes to pass his army from Europe to Asia—" Philip, somewhat overtaken, was falling around—"why, you see that he is unable to get himself from one couch to another!" And Alexander was no temperance brother: an all-night party, in coincidence with one of the low fevers the British Expeditionary Forces recently encountered in those countries, is believed to have terminated his conquests and his god-like dreams together. Asia has brewed exotic potations from time immemorial, curious and outlandish liquors,

¹ *Alcohol: One Man's Meat* —, by Edward A. Strecker and Francis T. Chambers. \$2.50. Macmillan.

flavored with rose leaves and perfumes. The Romans were notable vintners and consumers, and thickened their wines with resin.

The white-skinned barbarians of the North quaffed vastly of mead, which seems to have had a cereal base, rectified with honey. The Russians appeared on the historic scene furious with vodka — although a Russian will drink anything, and more of it than most people. To the kilted Caledonians in their damp and drafty highlands is credited the discovery of the distillation of *uisque-beatha*, that is to say, whisky, about the sixteenth century. Even the North American Indians, Stone Age folk, knew before the pale face came that the gall-bladder secretions of a fresh-killed buffalo, mixed with ashes, induced a thoroughly satisfying drunkenness.

These facts, duly established by the solemn investigators of social history, indicate that the drinking of alcohol is no new thing. Its use and its misuse have always been close after war and love among man's major activities. Under the not unreasonable impression that it was a stimulant and an adjustment, he took it when he was cold to make him feel warm again; when he was sad, to raise his spirits; when he was bored, to

amuse himself; when he was gay, to increase and prolong his gaiety. And once in a while those rugged individuals appear who took it because they liked it, and said so.

Alcohol, then, is a most ancient human commodity, and its use one of the oldest of social habits. It is natural that it has received at all times and in all societies considerable attention. Its production and distribution are important sources of revenue to governments and grafters; it is peculiarly the sport of legislators and the prey of reformers. Those addicted to it have suffered more than other sinners from correction, regulation, and oppressive admonition. The United States, which never does anything by halves, except use judgment, lately staged one of the most extreme experiments in history: a thing not here profitable to discuss. And drinkers have kept right on drinking: always have and always will.

Modern research adds no new facts to this sorry history; but — along with sex and other matters which we have ignorantly taken for granted — it edifies us by a new approach, indicating things undreamed of in the old philosophies. In the first place, biochemistry establishes that the age-old idea of alcohol's stimulating qualities is a

delusion and a snare. It isn't a stimulant at all: it is a narcotic. Further, it is about the only quick-acting narcotic available to all, at a low price and within legal bounds. The narcotic, in its essence, panders to a real or imagined need to escape from some undesired reality, a tooth-ache, or a belly-ache, or insomnia, or some such thing. And since the lot of the children of men is characterized by much of sorrow and disappointment and frustration, the machineries of escape do not lack patrons, and are not likely to fall into disuse.

Dr. Edward A. Strecker, A.M., M.D., and so on for nine printed lines on his title page, in collaboration with one Francis T. Chambers, Jr. (only one line after his name), now take up the problem in a concise and dispassionate little book called *Alcohol: One Man's Meat*—and you can supply the rest of the quotation. Theirs is not the angle of the Temperance Brothers, who go after the demon in the manner of St. George assaulting the Dragon, with a slogan and an emotion, to do battle on a field lighted on one side by the glow from the Heavenly mansions and on the other by the flickering red fires of Hell. They concede, in the beginning,

that some individuals find in alcohol a meat agreeable to their needs; and with them the investigators have no concern. But there is another group to whom it is poison, and it is this group they here place under scrutiny. It is a large group and a growing group: they draw upon insurance tables to show that rejections by reason of alcoholic damage have increased, among applicants under the age of thirty, 183 per cent in the last five years: they quote the figures of the Nation Council of Safety to the effect that eighteen per cent of the traffic fatalities in twenty-six States involved alcoholic incapacity. And if other evidence were lacking, this book indicates that they enjoy in their profession a very good practice from the ranks of the bibulous.

The good physicians first concede, regretfully, that persons otherwise of reasonable conduct indulge regularly in this dangerous drug, many of them without appreciable harm to themselves or their associates. They proceed, like able scientists, to identify and isolate their man, the abnormal drinker, as distinct from the normal.

Thus: the subject has had a long day at the office, or elsewhere, and he looks forward to a small horn of

alcohol at the end of it. He has his cocktail, and feels better: he isn't so tired, and it's remarkably good liquor: he has another. He is drawn into conversation with somebody — bright, amusing chap, full of original thoughts — and he says some pretty good things himself: yes, thanks, fill it up. Off to one side the cares that infest the day are folding their tents like the Arabs: silly to have worried about that income-tax matter — we'll find the money. Oh, here you are again, little Tinker-Bell! Well, just one: now, when the little woman said five's my limit, she didn't really mean it — she's very prejudiced and given to overstatement upon occasions. All right, let's go somewhere and eat. There's a very important matter I want to talk over with you: I know you can understand it. It's fine, the way you understand the way I feel about things. I go along and do the best I can, and my best is pretty good, if I do say it, but nobody appreciates me. . . . In a word, the subject is getting moist around the edges. He is on the way to becoming, as they say, tight. If he stops here, goes home to dinner and so to bed, don't give him a thought: some good angel he enjoys has passed the word: Son, you'd better knock off. The subject does:

and if he does, this book is not for him.

It is the other man, now on the crest of the wave and desiring to stay there. He proceeds. Progressively his inhibitions flee from him disgusted: his maturity peels away, reverts stage by stage to a blatant untrammelled infancy, without dignity, decency, nor reticence. He may follow his trained muscles home by midnight; scornful friends may deposit him there later; or he may not get there at all. The next morning there'll be the hangover, vernacular for alcoholic poisoning: and his tender womenfolk will commit atrocities upon his defenseless psyche which would make a Mescalario Apache envious. His native vigor asserts itself, as an agonized and forlorn counter-attack upon a lost position, and he gets his head above the bitter flood and proceeds to his office, or whatever refuge he has from home; rather in the manner of a poisoned rat with the urge to die in the open air. If his associates are sinners, having it in their hearts: There but for the Grace of God go I — they avert their eyes and deal gently with him. Around eleven o'clock — two hours on the job, say; or a couple of days, because time is an elastic and inconsistent medium — he staves off im-

minent dissolution by rushing out to snatch a quick one; or maybe two. He is able to down a sandwich with his beer at lunch. He gets through a long afternoon, probably cut short to grab a little horn here and there—not a drink, really: I need this. He believes he needs it, and he is right. Then the cool of the evening folds about him, and his personal situation can be favorable, or worse than all of Dante's hells.

Some especially distressing incident, in which the constabulary may or may not figure, gives him pause. There are always incidents. He will say, one of those forenoons following several nights in, and a relative thinness of alcohol in the blood-stream, so that the little policemen are all in good voice and crying out: Now look at you!—he will say: Old boy, maybe they are right. Maybe you are hitting it a shade too heavy. Look at all these nice fellows around here who never get overstimulated—their faces are turned towards the morning. Look here: you're a man who can always take it or leave it alone: better knock it off. He knocks it off.

Dr. Samuel Johnson says somewhere that abstinence is easier than temperance. I believe these medicos quote him, to the same effect. The

subject—let's not call him victim—finds it so. He has quit drinking, the way a traffic light turns from green to red. He observes his playmates, stultifying themselves with the Worm That Perisheth, and the spectacle leaves him cold. Disturbingly, however, there is less of pith and vigor in their conversation than he had fancied. It's hardly worth a man's while. Whatever made him think this chap was witty, relating old chestnuts that induced mirth when this one's beard was less than an anticipation: but not since? Or that gal attractive: her tongue is loose at both ends and hinged in the middle, and the way she rubs up against you and purrs—there's such a thing as good taste, ain't there? And this coffee isn't made right: you can't brew decent coffee without expending some coffee beans. This stuff is terrible. Further, who ever imagined a tray of dismembered fish-bait, stale crackers, and Spanish olives that never saw Spain by the width of two continents and one ocean, were appetizing? A man can't cut himself off from society. He's got to live in the world, hasn't he? But does he have to live with this sort of cattle? The victim says, with passion, by God, no. He may be genial for a period. He may produce light

and facetious nothings to explain his startling situation when his friends inquire. But, sooner or later, he becomes morose. He says in his heart: Well, I'm just going on with it long enough to prove that I can take it or let it alone. Then I'll have a social glass: and maybe a drink before dinner — no more all day.

And in the pleasant bowers of fancy, where a man is at his ease, and one waits to run swiftly with the order on a polished tray, he turns the matter over in his mind. When he starts again, what will he take, now? The Machine Age has put the treasures of all the world at his disposal. A Scotch and soda? Depends on the time of day: brandy and soda might be indicated. Or — assuming it was a sort of formal luncheon — a Martini, with just the least bit of Italian vermouth. And the correct brand of gin. No bathtub stuff. Or a glass of wine. A wine with authority: one of the fortified wines. Champagne, now. A lot of people don't like champagne: but after all —

His fancies will be the measure of his experience. If his idea of liquor is white mule, from a mash boiled in a kerosene tin and its distillation wrung from a horse-blanket folded over the tin, he may

visualize fine second-run stuff from a copper worm. At the other end of the scale, he can lick his dry lips over visions of the rum punches at the Myrtlebank in Jamaica, or the Burgundy at La Perrouse in Paris, or certain little wines of the Moselle country — I think the name was Grunhauser, and the town Saar-Louis: or the mint juleps they make at a place in Washington, D. C. It's a personal problem: what Drs. Strecker and Chambers call the stage of alcoholic imagery.

Sooner or later, they observe, their eyes upon their case histories, the inevitable happens. As the dog returns to his vomit the drinker returns to his drink, and the last state of that man (or woman) is more wretched than the first.

It's no good to remind him of his dear old mother, his loving wife, his adorable small children, his really excellent opening in life, his prospects, or the distressing future opened to his liver and kidneys. When you show him the actuaries' returns, and the statistics of traffic fatalities, he's cold, and remains so. He only wonders what the vintners buy, one-half so precious as the stuff they sell. His antics, amusing to you if you have no responsibility for him, disgust-

ing if you have to take him home, are to the enlightened faculty strident symptoms of disease.

The layman, accustomed from his youth up to cases in his surroundings which were not talked about among the family, and to seeing, in mature life, poor simps who just can't handle it, has been taking these things in his stride. Some do: some don't.

Not at all, say the Doctors: this man is sick. Just as sick as though he had a gall-stone, or a duodenal ulcer, or a brain tumor. And if he comes of himself to that knowledge, and wants to be cured, they can cure him: or—to be fair to them—they will show him how he may cure himself.

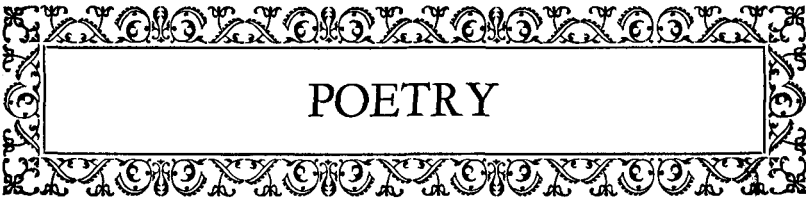
There follow some hundred pages of treatment studies, and of case histories, all instructive. A sort of psycho-therapy is indicated. The point seems to be that the abnormal drinker must eliminate

alcohol not only from his conduct, but from his mind, and from his concept of life.

I quote one austere paragraph: "We . . . say, with a wealth of material to back up the statement, that an abnormal drinker is cured as long as he never again takes anything to drink. A doctor of our acquaintance, who worked in a sanatorium devoted to the treatment of addict patients, once remarked from the years of his experience: 'I don't believe a man is cured until he can not only visualize going through life without alcohol, but can feel confident that St. Peter's proffer of a welcoming cup of heavenly ambrosia would be automatically turned down on the suspicion that it contained alcohol.'"

One Man's Meat is a valuable little book. It is by common sense, not by emotion, that alcohol must be handled.





POETRY

THESE GOOD COMRADES

BY LOUIS STODDARD

Poured by the riverful into the sea
The rains from the earth's hills cannot convert
One saline wave so that perceptibly
The effervescent foam will lie inert.
The bitter blizzard, stalking far from land,
That sinks its hissing flakes in the green sides
Of the Atlantic hills time out of hand
Finds that the waves outmatch its league-long strides.
Yet men, confronted with the whitecapped waste
Of time that undermines the crumbling years,
Go strolling down that shore in no great haste
Exploring crevices for souvenirs.
These are good comrades, these who turn their backs
Upon the tide that washes out their tracks.

WHITE DEATH

BY W. JAY SMITH

Now from the kiss removed, in grass we lie
Entombed within the absolute abyss
Of oak trunks; over us the wind of this
October foams white death down open sky,
And branches clip us to the hard gray clay.
The hieroglyphs of leaves that lid the hill,
The first moth caught within the will

Of frost — are over us, and speak decay.
Do not relent, beloved, and forget
The contract of our minds, a moment past
Beyond all questioning proved ever fast,
Indelibly consigned when our lips met.
Let frost descend upon us if it must,
And we shall wait beneath, resigned to dust.

DENIAL

BY NELLIE K. A. FOSTER

MY DOOR is locked to him for aye.
I add a bar to stay advance
Lest stubborn bolts, assailed, give way
Before the pressure of romance.

Footfalls approach, grow loud, decrease.
In hollow halls I listen, numb.
Anguished I seek to hide my keys —
Only because he does not come.

WHAT SOLACE?

BY RALPH FRIEDRICH

NOT of the going downward of the root
To taste the food of earth;
Not of the slow ascent of life within the vein,
The blossom's fragile birth,
The still processional of flower into fruit:
Not of these things is any solace wrought
For Helen who has lain
So long in Grecian earth, for Heloïse,

For white Francesca, over whom the trees
Exult unknowing. When have lovers sought
To woo the laurel, to embrace the palm?
What birch, however delicate and white,
Has captured Helen's wonder, though she lay
Beneath it, nourishing
Its beauty with her excellence? What day
Has heard Francesca speaking her delight
With tongues of leaves? What solace have they now
In feeding root and bough,
Who were their flesh alone, whose flesh alone decreed
Their glory and their need?

HONOR

BY ELISABETH G. VAN TINE

HONOR of man and man,
Between beloved and beloved,
Since light and truth began
Is never proved.

A man will choose to lie,
A woman herself withhold;
But who shall affirm, or deny,
Or the battle be told?

The kiss, the act, the word
Is fair, but a secret spot
Wounded by rusted sword
May rot and rot.

There is no plume to show
How white honor is,
But the knowing self shall know
The victories.

AMERICANA

ALASKA

THE Uplift hits the sourdoughs of Valdez, according to an advertisement in the *Valdez Weekly Miner*:

NOTICE TO PATRONS

The City Cafe has announced that during the winter months, a special service will be available. All parties desiring meal service at late hours may be served by calling by phone, ringing three times. This service is not available to drinking parties or to intoxicated persons.

CALIFORNIA

THE riddle of totalitarianism is solved by a noted Sunkist savant, as recorded in the *Anaheim Bulletin*:

Explaining the Teutonic philosophy, Louis Danz, world traveler, lecturer, musician, and author of Anaheim, talked to the Santa Ana Lions Club yesterday. The topic of the talk was "Germany's New Religion." . . . Danz said that Hitler is just acting out the dramas of Nietzsche and the music of Bach.

NEW evidence of technical perfection in the Studio Belt, as reported by *Talk of Hollywood*:

"When Were You Born?" a murder mystery solved by lady astrologists, features twelve suspects, each born under a different sign of the Zodiac. Everything in the picture will conform to the study of the stars—the twelve players will actually have been born under the signs they portray. And Dr. Manly Hall, head of the Los Angeles Philosophical Research Society, will figure out, according to the sun, moon, tides, etc., the most propitious starting date.

COLORADO

UNIQUE attack upon an ancient meteorological problem, as reported by the erudite *Boulder Daily Camera*:

About 4:30 A.M. today Boulder County's new fire truck was practically on its way to fight a fire—until it was discovered that the red glow which covered the northwestern sky was the aurora borealis or "Northern Lights".

INDIANA

NOTE on the development of the 100% American he-man, as reported by the Associated Press in a dispatch from Indianapolis:

A slip of the lip cost Henry Blunk, 27, second-degree burns and a trip to the hospital. Blunk forgot he had

a lighted cigarette in his mouth and yawned. The cigarette fell inside his shirt and set fire to the hair on his chest.

KENTUCKY

IMPORTANT civic spectacle is staged by the burghers of Maysville, according to the Portsmouth (Ohio) *Times*:

E. L. Weaver walked off with the championship of Mason County in long-distance tobacco spitting. The Orangeburg man nosed out a May-slick expectorator by a mere one inch when a Weaver stream — propelled from a steady between-the-fingers stance — splashed 17 feet 6 inches away from the line.

A crowd of 200 men looked on while the 38 contestants arched their shots eastward on Market Street just north of Second Street. Four were disqualified — three for blowing.

MINNESOTA

FINAL ultimatum is issued by the Downtrodden of the Gopher State, according to the Minneapolis *Journal*:

Charging the Minnesota Relief program is “only a short-cut to starvation”, George Blake of Detroit Lakes, State vice president of the Workers Alliance, today told the Polk County Board at Crookston what his organization considers “fair and proper” for Relief clients. Asked where the money could be obtained to meet his demands, Blake retorted: “We don’t care about that.”

The “fair and proper” standard is:

Allowances of \$52.50 a month for groceries for a family of six, with additional sums for milk and cream.

A modern house at \$30 a month.

A total of \$108 for Winter fuel with provisions for repair and purchase of equipment when required.

Provisions for replacement of household equipment.

Funds for keeping up time-payments on furniture or other household necessities when families have entered into such contracts.

Clothing budgets of \$60 a year for adults and \$36 for children. WPA clothing not to count on this budget.

Carfare, union dues, and school supplies to be paid out of a \$3 monthly allowance for an adult and \$2 for each child under 16.

All medical and dental attention necessary, with the Relief client to have his choice of doctor or dentist.

Adequate burial grants.

Large enough staffs in Relief offices so clients will not have to wait.

All welfare board meetings to be public.

No deduction from monthly allowance because of “incidental” earnings.

Establishment of a minimum wage and a definite understanding there shall be no forced labor.

Blake told the board that “because people in private industry work for \$1 a day it doesn’t follow that Relief clients should”. The Workers Alliance chief said refusal by a client to do such work as shoveling snow or labor on streets and highways should not impair the client’s rights to aid.

Informed that many Polk County farmers live on much smaller budgets than he proposed, Blake replied that was no concern of his. The spokesman was accompanied to the meeting by twenty-five Workers Alliance members and a CIO organizer.

MISSOURI

DISHEARTENING lapse in grammar on the campus of the University of Missouri:

WOMEN'S FACULTY CLUB

Come with your knitting and sewing on January tenth, eight o'clock. We'll meet quite informally. Won't you bring an antidote or two, or have a short story to tell?

MRS. A. EMIG
Committee Chairman

NEW YORK

EVIDENCE of the new trend in readers' tastes, as set forth in the distinguished pages of *Pictorial Review*:

Next month we shall publish a fascinating article on stomach ulcers.

OHIO

CYNICISM taints the spirit of true forgiveness in the Christian village of Bryan, according to the Bryan *Democrat*:

Ida Beattie thanks the parties who stole her pickles and other things the last of October for returning part of the empty cans, and she asks them when they return the rest to please place them on the east porch instead of on the cement at the front door, for it rained last Friday night and when she lifted the pasteboard box the cans went through the bottom and some were broken. If they had asked for the canned stuff, she would have given it to them and they wouldn't have to answer to the sin of theft.

PENNSYLVANIA

CRYPTIC warning to CIO organizers in the Steel Belt, as advertised in the Johnstown *Democrat*:

LOOK

WORKINGMEN — NEW DEAL
OFFERING
of USED CARS — many makes and models

GOLD will not be accepted

CARS of the Lewis type, noisy and troublesome, will be sold cheap

I predict that the working class will lose over 1,000,000 cars through repossession before March 1.

The ones that closed your mills, robbed you of an income, caused you to lose your car, and pretend to be your friend are not the type that have ability to return these things.

To date your local STUDEBAKER dealer, "PEX" Cover, has not repossessed any new cars.

See these BARGAINS at 148
Horner St.

During 1918 I was trained and paid to fight U. S. enemies. Why stop now?

MRS. EMMA GUFFEY MILLER, sister of Lord Guffey of Pennsylvania, expresses her faith in the mentality of fellow party-members, according to the Pittsburgh *Sun Telegraph*:

I am perfectly willing to let Democrats and Republicans take examinations for Relief, and if the examinations are fairly taken and fairly marked, I just know the Democrats will go up higher than one to twenty-five.

THE OPEN FORUM

IN REPLY TO THE ENGLISH

SIR: Your recent letter from Mr. G. Smith of Bermuda, attacking Albert Jay Nock's penetrating criticism of the British propaganda machine, merits a point by point rebuttal. Mr. Smith begins his diatribe by stating that all our wars have been inspired by the hope of financial gain and that no Englishman expects better of us. I would like to remind him that the most important war we ever fought, our first war, had anything but that as its motive. In that war we fought for a liberty that no one then or since has attempted to describe in terms of money; and it is such Englishmen as Mr. Smith that make us everlastingly thankful for our independence. Perhaps Mr. Smith would descend from his Olympian heights long enough to explain to his ignorant American cousins what pecuniary profit we made in our *last* war. According to the figures, we are about \$39,000,000,000 in the hole—a good portion of which we lost in loans to Great Britain. And if we *had* entered the war for profit, that disgrace would weigh much more lightly upon our souls than does the odium of having been stupid enough to have fallen as we did for England's wartime propaganda.

By his argument, Mr. Smith seems to suppose that in contrast to America, England never had a tainted motive in a long and starry history. This is no doubt aptly demonstrated by her Opium War, her Boer War, and her frantic scramble for colonies at the close of the Great War.

Having sharply rebuked us for unsaintly *casus belli*, Mr. Smith now drags our whole civilization over the coals. He analyzes with amazing clarity our every vice, from the bribery of public officials to prostitution. We learn from his informative pen that,

unknown to us, our government is a cesspool of corruption and that prostitution in our unhappy land is so prevalent that it constitutes a major enterprise. In reply to his remarks about our government, I should like to remind him that it works fully as well as does the English government; and if there is more bribery in this country than in England it is because moneyed interests here have only this method by which to influence the government, while in England the corresponding moneyed interests *constitute* the government. Thus it is that while Congress sometimes gets out of hand and shines the spotlight on business, such things never occur in England. The stuffed bondholders in Parliament see to that—as is illustrated by their successful opposition to any adequate investigation of munition companies similar to the one held in this country. And on the score of moral degeneracy, it is worthy to note, that at least twenty filthy sex magazines which are burnt on sight by the New York police, are sold openly in Piccadilly Circus.

Mr. Smith now takes up the subject of the World War in full. He states disdainfully that we entered the war only to safeguard our commercial interest in the weakening Allies with whom, by force of geographical circumstance, we had been constrained to trade to the exclusion of the Central Powers. He then derides our services financially and militarily to the Allies and concludes his remarks on this subject with a scornful reference to our dependence on the draft. If Mr. Smith is really interested in knowing why we sold and lent exclusively to the Allies, it was because England, writing a new page in the flagrant violation of international law, cut off all com-

munication to the Central Powers *even by sea cable* — without bothering even to declare a blockade! This is history. Now concerning the reason for our entering the war: if the big men in Washington were influenced to declare war by Mr. Morgan's fears for American investments, those of us who did the fighting and those of us who did the heavy spending did so because we were idiotic enough to believe that we were aiding England in a just cause — that "democracy" was really an issue. Now that Great Britain's last hideous hypocrisy has been revealed, we stand corrected.

If the assistance we rendered the Allies in the last war was so unimportant, we at least heard no suggestions that it be withdrawn. When the fighting is all over, it is of course time for us to hear how the money we sent over was only enough to keep British children from the inconvenience of going without their daily ice cream and how our troops were useful only in patrolling the provinces while the soldiers of really important powers saved civilization from the Hun. In 1917, however, England was singing a different song. Parliament would have done handspins to ensure our continued support. Nor have we forgotten how King George's sheer relief on our entering the fight so unbalanced the poor man that he celebrated the Fourth of July in St. Paul's Cathedral! (It will be many moons before such a thing as that ever happens again.)

Mr. Smith concludes with the statement that England now realizes America will fight only if guaranteed "a cut of suitable dimensions". He remarks that cuts are impossible to provide in modern warfare, but that England is unafraid to fight her own wars. Now what, in England's experience, indicates to her we will fight only if guaranteed a cut? I suppose it was the vast tract of German land in Africa we demanded as our "cut" in the last war. Or was it only the *prompt* collection *with interest* of our war debts?

After the whole thing is said and done,

I was very glad indeed to see Mr. Smith's letter. Such frank opinions are a genuine benefit to the people of the Republic. It is the slimy British appeals for "world co-operation" and "world democracy" that are treacherous. If we heard more from Mr. G. Smith and less from Sir Herbert Aimes and some of the others, we would never be involved in the next catastrophe and we could be building a happier and more prosperous America while England and her Dominions crusade their way to suicide.

JOHN A. HUSTON

*Ann Arbor,
Michigan.*

SIR: May I as an American say that Mr. G. Smith in his letter, "England Talks Back", proves why the English are dubbed Johnnie Bulls. I have been unfortunate enough to have lived several years in communities in America where there were a great number of people who were born in England, and who came to the United States to live because this country afforded them more opportunities than did England. I find these people have one common fault. No matter how long they have lived in this country, they can't seem to forget how wonderful everything is in England and how deplorable everything is in America. If that really is the case, I should think they would go back to England on the first boat and stay there.

For Mr. Smith's information, there were two of our wars that did not have financial benefit in the forefront. These wars happen to have been fought with this same frigid England that Mr. Smith seems so arrogantly proud to call his country. These two wars were fought because this same England that says America is so mercenary, tried to make an unfair financial gain, not by shrewd investments but by over-taxation and mistreatment of a struggling handful of people who had the courage to break away from the tyranny of a so-called Mother Nation. I should think that as a result of these two

wars, jolly old England would know that it does not take financial enterprise to make America fight.

For the English gentleman to imply that the Allies in the World War could have won without the help of the Americans, both in manpower and finance, is not only disgusting but insane. It may or may not be true that war was declared by America because of the investments of financiers. If this was the case, however, the American people did not realize it at the time and they responded quite wholeheartedly to the declaration. If England should manage to get herself involved in the present foreign mess, she would promptly send America an S.O.S. and plead for this country's complete co-operation.

DON HIMROD

Lincoln,
Nebraska.

SIR: IN THE MERCURY for February appears a letter signed by one G. Smith of Bermuda, on which I would like to comment briefly. If Mr. G. Smith is the man I believe him to be, he is not an Englishman as he calls himself in his first sentence, but a Bermudian, an altogether different sort of animal. A Bermudian is a native (and how they do love to be called "natives") of Bermuda, a minute — $19\frac{1}{2}$ square miles — colony of the British Empire.

Bermuda is inhabited by whites and blacks in almost equal proportion. These inhabitants, with the few isolated exceptions that prove the rule, are conceited, poorly educated, ignorant, unintelligent, supercilious, and smug. They are also largely inbred and quite insular. Their outstanding characteristic is laziness. They live on what money they can wangle out of visiting Americans who visit the islands in quantities of 80,000 and over per annum. The latest official figures to which I have access state that approximately 92% of the Colony's income comes out of New York harbor. Bermuda, while officially belonging to the British Empire, is to all practical purposes a suburb

of New York City. If it were not for the tourist trade, Bermudians would starve.

Bermuda's life revolves about American visitors and the money these Americans spend. The main topic of conversation of Bermudians consists of one question, "How many passengers were there on the last boat?" The whole life of Bermuda is a racket — getting out of Americans all possible cash. The main object in life of young Bermudians is to marry Americans, preferably Americans with money.

I could go on almost *ad infinitum* along these lines but will spare you and your readers. The point I wish to make is that the letter by Mr. G. Smith is a typical Bermuda "bellyache", quite characteristic of a typical Bermudian and quite foreign to the normal inclination of an Englishman.

I have lived among Englishmen a great deal and have yet to find one who knew Bermudians who did not heartily dislike them. Letters such as Mr. G. Smith's furnish part of the reason.

HERBERT BAINBRIDGE HAYDEN
Warrenton,
Virginia.



THE LADY AND THE CAT

SIR: IN THE AMERICAN MERCURY for December, Alan Devoe, author of "Our Enemy, the Cat", declared:

"and in his feline heart is neither love nor gratitude".

Mr. Devoe is in error in this statement. Some years ago I raised a kitten with an Airedale puppy. When they were about four years old I was sitting one evening in a rocker eating some candy when the dog, then a huge creature, jumped at me to grab a piece of the candy. I leaned back and screamed and the cat came quickly from under another rocker and jumped on the dog's back, tearing the fur out with his teeth and digging into his hide with his claws. Panic reigned until we were able to shut the cat in one room and the dog in another. For a couple of days after this they

fought shy of each other and then became the best of friends again.

Will Mr. Devoe please tell me for what reason, if not love and gratitude, this cat came to my defense when he thought I was being attacked by the dog?

LENORE STEWART

*San Diego,
California.*

MR. DEVOE REPLIES

SIR: After a careful reading of Miss Stewart's letter, I can find nothing in her adventure to justify the hypothesis that the cat "came to her defense when he thought that she was being attacked by the dog". The facts, as I understand them, are these:

A woman and two animals were in a room. One of the animals, entirely without ferocious intent, endeavored to take a share of the woman's food. Thereupon the woman (who had misconstrued the beast's intention) made violent and dramatic gestures and emitted a shattering shriek.

As a student of animal behavior, I submit that the second animal (the cat) might have reacted to this sudden and unaccountable pandemonium by doing almost *anything*. What he actually did, apparently, was to attack the dog. He might just as probably have attacked the woman, or made a wild leap to the chandelier, or had a fit. Animals, and most especially cats, are extremely sensitive to sudden outbursts of noise and confusion. In the presence of such outbursts they are apt to become hysterical and frenzied. I am acquainted with many docile and gentle dogs who, during the pandemonium of a thunderstorm, become dangerous beasts, for in their panicky frenzy they will bite anyone who happens to be near them. And I am sure that even Miss Stewart would not insist that this behavior, on a dog's part, springs from an intelligent and reasoned motivation.

It is evident that Miss Stewart has never been an animal-trainer. The effects of a sudden shriek, emitted in a cage of lions and tigers, are dramatic and remarkable.

The beasts—which have been perfectly tranquil while the trainer kept his poise—are very apt to go completely berserk. In about two seconds the cage becomes a maelstrom and a fury. The biting, slashing, and ripping are entirely indiscriminate; the trainer may or may not be killed.

I think that any professional animal-trainer or observer of animal behavior will agree with me that the sole moral to be drawn from Miss Stewart's anecdote is that persons who, in the presence of nervous and peace-loving animals, suddenly emit piercing screams or indulge in kindred electrifying antics, must not be surprised at *anything* that results.

ALAN DEVOE

New York City.



ORCHID DEPARTMENT

SIR: When I want Fascist reading matter, I'd get it at the fount, *i.e.*, Italian or German, not from some cheap imitator *à la* AMERICAN MERCURY. Which is painful for me to say. At one time I thought THE MERCURY a real magazine, but that was before its present publisher bought it.

As for reading anything by a Hearst stooge, well, I believe I'd almost rather read Mencken. Something like his prediction *re* the last election. Dr. Roosevelt!

UPTON SINCLAIR

*Oakland,
California.*

SIR: I am no longer a subscriber of your magazine because there were a few articles lately where comparison was made between Hitler, Mussolini, and cannibal Stalin! The first two are greatest statesmen of our time and last one, although a wild Georgian himself, is one of the Satanic gang of murderous kikes from all ghettos of the world. To make comparison between those three men means either that you are a bunch of kikes or a bunch of idiots.

A WHITE RUSSIAN

New York City.

SIR: Mr. Daniel Wilson in his letter to THE OPEN FORUM has analyzed the philosophy of THE MERCURY. I have condensed his findings somewhat in my own study of the five issues received, to a three-fold outline which, I believe, contains the whole attitude or philosophy of THE MERCURY:

1. "We hate the *New Deal*."
2. "We *hate* the *New Deal*."
3. "We hate"

The last part of the outline is left open in fairness to the slight flexibility which is sometimes allowed to creep in to your otherwise rigid policy. Since "New Deal" is to you synonymous with everything bad, there is no need to include the many items in Mr. Wilson's outline. But one might insert such occasional things as sex restraint, cats, etc.

At first I was so repulsed at your vitriolic, reactionary hate-spilling that I penned a very mean letter. When it occurred to me that Satan cannot cast out Satan and that I was stooping to the very thing I condemn, I destroyed it. I do honestly believe that you are defeating your own purpose. Nothing would come nearer to making me vote for Roosevelt for a third term than THE MERCURY. I now read regularly the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, *Christian Century*, *National Geographic*, *Parent's Magazine*, and THE AMERICAN MERCURY. The last mentioned is the only one I am ashamed to have my intelligent friends see. But I think I have given it a fair trial.

Allow me to emphasize my point with a familiar story. It seems that a Yankee was a guest of an English hunt club. He wanted to do things right and to make a favorable impression. So he asked his friend for instruction. Soon, however, he found that he was being treated coldly, and that women, when present, shunned him. He sought his friend for the answer. "What am I doing that is wrong?" he asked. "On the whole," said his friend, "I think you are doing fine. You assist the ladies to their mounts, you

are gentle to the horses, you are courteous in every way. But perhaps I might suggest one thing—that you use the familiar huntsman's call of 'Tally Ho!' instead of shouting as you do when the fox is jumped, 'There goes the dirty son-of-a-bitch!'"

Your opinions may be right or wrong. I'm surely not the one to say. But sanitary plumbing is a recognized item of present-day civilization.

ANONYMOUS

—,
Oregon.

SIR: The article "Death In Halifax" in the February issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY is about the finest piece of descriptive writing I have read since a schoolteacher required me to copy Dickens' description of London from the first part of *Bleak House*. You are to be congratulated upon your selection of Mr. Gilligan's article, but I hope that his future subjects will be less gruesome. Incidentally, it is astonishing—to me at least—how many of my acquaintances who, like myself, are in their early forties, have completely forgotten the Halifax disaster.

JOHN J. IAGO

*Baltimore,
Maryland.*

SIR: On or about October 22, 1937, I subscribed to your magazine under your special offer for six months. Since then I have been receiving and reading thoroughly your issues and now feel I must voice my opinion.

When your special offer expires, you need not ask me to renew, as the articles contained in THE MERCURY pertaining to current topics or relating to the various customs and methods of our present government are entirely too prejudiced and biased. I have no desire to go into the political question in general or the New Deal in particular, since its discussion is limitless. To my mind, it is unfair and stupid on your part, to say the least, to insert articles of the nature men-

tioned to be read by a supposed varied public.

While I cannot say I adhere strictly to or firmly believe in the principles of the New Deal, I admit I favor them, and, having an open mind, am more than willing to read articles in opposition. But to refer to the President continuously in the sarcastic term "Dr. Roosevelt", in addition to the many other slurring remarks about his conduct and the conduct of the many men working with and under his jurisdiction, should not be tolerated. Surely, your authors are not trying to convey to an intelligent public that the world was all Heaven prior to President Roosevelt's régime! Surely, they are not trying to convey that the Old Deal government was perfection! Every form of government has its faults, as has every human being, but to read *THE MERCURY* one would think that the New Deal is "all wet" and the Old Deal was O.K. Pardon me while I laugh. A little courtesy to the man who has been overwhelmingly elected to the highest office in the land, not once, but twice, by the people of the United States, and a little co-operation to the man who is trying, even if not entirely successful, to get the people of this country on a better footing, to my mind is not asking too much. To sum it all up, I am thoroughly disgusted with your magazine.

Incidentally, I might add that I read *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and am sorry to say that it is the cheapest and trashiest story I ever read, and am more than surprised and chagrined that *THE MERCURY*, a periodical which is considered to be read by the more intellectual and educated people, should advocate and recommend such a cheap novel.

FLORENCE LUBIN

New York City.

SIR: I happened to be reading a number of issues of *THE MERCURY* in the library. That's the only place where I'd even think of reading them — only because I saw them lying on the table. Otherwise I never

would ask for them. And I certainly wouldn't buy them. In your November edition you proved that in spite of your denial, your periodical is a Bible of American Fascism. Never was there anything as disgusting as the article by Albert J. Nock, entitled "The Difficulty of Thinking". Apparently the writer of that obscene, slanderous, libelous and malicious piece of chicanery, thinks as Vargas of Brazil — that the people are too childish and too stupid to vote. He sneers at majority rule as Anarchy and Mob Rule. His diatribe against President Franklin D. Roosevelt was so disrespectful that one can't help but wondering whether or not Mr. Nock really has any shame. For one to make such a tirade in saying that the Majority behind the President are of the Infantile Mentality and Morality of a twelve-year-old child, is a gross insult and disgrace to the intelligence of people who really do think.

I certainly hope that readers will boycott your circulation until there is nothing left of it. And furthermore I dare you to even print this.

H. PETERSON

*Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania.*

SIR: I have just finished reading the January issue of *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*, which I do once in a while, for old times' sake. In my "salad" days *THE MERCURY* proved to be a stimulating course of thinking for college students. Those were the days immediately following the disillusionment of the World War. One of the major tragedies of today has been the shifting of leaders of thought, particularly in our current periodicals. None has made the journey so complete as *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* to the old-fashioned mourners' bench. Eventually you may become the leading "organ" of the Chamber of Commerce, but as for youth finding that good, healthy, swash-buckling criticism of things in general, through *THE MERCURY*, I doubt it.

When we grow old we grow sentimental,

so here are a few sincere tears for THE MERCURY that used to be.

DONALD M. SHERIDAN, *Pastor*
First Christian Church

Bartlesville,
Oklahoma.

SIR: I am exceedingly happy to be numbered among the thousands of regular readers of THE MERCURY and in addition to the splendid articles which I look forward to each month, I very much enjoy reading the editorials and certainly do not want to overlook the letters which come out in such array in THE OPEN FORUM.

One can at once classify the readers who take such glory in criticizing Mr. Mencken, Mr. Varney, Mr. Nock, and others, and I am convinced that as each forthcoming issue is welcomed into the homes of America, these splendid writers gain friends by the hundred. Mr. Mencken's article "The Triumph of the Have-Not" in the January issue is a masterpiece and paints the picture as truly as could any artist's brush. It would be a blessing for the nation if every soul in America could read this splendid Epistle.

I always find Mr. Nock's articles timely and to the point, and have in mind at this moment "Liberals Never Learn" in the August issue. Inasmuch as we have an abundance of self-styled Liberals, I suggest that a copy of said article be framed and adorn the wall of the study of every Liberal's home. Mr. Pollock's "'Workers' vs. The Workers" in the October issue would likewise serve a splendid purpose.

After carefully reviewing "The Brick Bats" and in all fairness to the criticisms offered, I have yet to read the first letter which embodied a single statement which could possibly be classed as honest and unprejudiced in this battle of words. I would like much to show my appreciation by sending you a neat bouquet for publishing "Confessions of a New Dealer" in the February issue. The "Faithful" will of course belittle and disavow this open confession, but it is nevertheless a true picture of what can be

seen from one end of our nation to the other, and the Ex-Jobholder who penned this confession should now be holding a place in the Cabinet, for it is certain that he could do much good in the Department of Labor, whose personnel has been enjoying a whirligig ride since 1933.

I consider THE MERCURY the very best publication to be had in this country today, and it shall be my purpose to supply schools in this vicinity with a copy each month. There is no satisfaction in the realization that we are at the crossroads, but there is encouragement in the fact that THE MERCURY, as a dauntless pathfinder, will point out the way which will lead us up the road so ably mapped by the pioneers.

J. W. GATES

Wittenberg,
Wisconsin.

SIR: I would not read another copy of THE MERCURY at any time ever again. I was given a subscription to your magazine a year ago as a Valentine gift. I have read every copy for a year, from cover to cover. It has at the conclusion of each number left me with a bad taste in my mouth, so to speak, and a desire to pick up a basket of bombs and go around the world throwing them in the front yards of other American citizens. I feel the present times are troubled ones. I realize many mistakes have been made during the present Administration. But I do feel this is a grand nation of ours, being guided by a very outstanding man.

At times I feel the country is going ahead and I somehow take part — and then along comes a copy of THE MERCURY and when I have read it I feel as though we ought to throw the whole works into the discard and give up. Nothing in the world is right or ever can be. Stop selling America short.

MARY C. GOLDEN

Front Royal,
Virginia.

SIR: Am pleased to renew my subscription for two years for of all magazines I am

reading, *THE MERCURY* gives me the most information along the lines of our economic and political life that are now so threatened by Roosevelt, who seems determined to bankrupt the nation, plunge us into war, and emerge as dictator. I am seventy-five years of age, and related to one President, Garfield, so I have more than ordinary reasons for being interested.

I am reading seven weekly or monthly magazines and *THE MERCURY* excels them all. The February number was the best and I have seen to it that it was read by others whom I believe may profit. It will not be long now until I will be in Heaven, but it disturbs me to see our rulers so filled with folly. It looks as if we were headed for a smash.

MARY I. BALLOU

*Great Falls,
Montana.*

SIR: When I first subscribed to *THE MERCURY* I enjoyed it very much because of its literary style, because I found it frank, stimulating, and courageous, and because for the most part it represented economic and political beliefs contrary to my own. However, each subsequent issue served to drive to the inexorable conclusion that *THE MERCURY* is dedicated to the single, monotonous purpose of opposition to the New Deal.

The uncharitable impatience and the insulting disrespect with which you treat anything or anybody opposed to your ideologies, the positive omniscience and infallibility which you assume so glibly — are factors which will make intelligent and fair-minded people question your sincerity of purpose and become out of sympathy with your tactics. Certainly there must have been one laudable feature amongst all the beliefs and characters you oppose, yet I cannot recall a single admission of that nature in your magazine.

Please cancel my subscription.

WILLIAM J. THOMAS

*Paterson,
New Jersey.*

SIR: May I congratulate you on the couple of recent numbers of *THE MERCURY* I have seen? Gilbert Chesterton, with his usual acumen, once remarked that it was the newest and latest and not the old and hoary tyrannies, that we had to be on guard against. It is quite in the best tradition of *THE MERCURY* that it should be among the first to penetrate the Liberal disguise of the New Deal and sense the pseudo-Fascism beneath the veil.

However, the hard blows dealt will not avail much unless *THE MERCURY* comes to stand for some more positive solution. Capitalism of the merely plutocratic sort seems out. Mr. Belloc's "Neither Capitalism Nor Socialism", I think, points the way. In this country there is much hard thinking along these lines being done by Mr. Herbert Agar and others. I suggest you explore more contributions of this kind.

J. L. R.

*Washington,
D. C.*

SIR: I consider *THE MERCURY* the most prejudiced and therefore the least valuable publication of all the more or less popular magazines. That is not because I disagree with your opposition to Mr. Roosevelt. On the contrary, I seldom find it possible to sing his praises. However, it seems to me that your rather hysterical stuff is one of his greatest assets, or would be if enough people read it. You almost make me jump in front of him to protect him every time you take a shot at him.

It's simply swell of you to rave against Communism and Fascism, but do be more careful not to make some of us feel that underneath it all you are for Fascism!

Fortunately, subscriptions are not yet compulsory in this country.

LEE KREISELMAN

New York City.

SIR: I want to express my pleasure concerning some of the articles in the August *MERCURY*. The "Truth About American

Fascism" by Harold Lord Varney; the "Credo of American Capitalism" by Sokolsky; "Utopia by Sterilization" by Mencken; and "Liberals Never Learn" by Albert Jay Nock. The article, "Liberals Never Learn" is perfect, expressing in every sentence so exactly my own ideas that I wish it could be reprinted over and over again.

With Mr. Varney, however, I should like to take issue, regardless of the fact that he renders a signal service to your readers by presenting the Fascist condition of this country today as brought about by President Roosevelt. I do not think that Mr. Roosevelt halted an American Fascist possibility; nor do I think that he drew into the New Deal all the lunatic fringe for the purpose of saving the country from their movements, but for the purpose of using them to help further his own program. Nor do I agree that he performed a spectacular service to American democracy by sidetracking the forces which might have led to overt Fascism. At the time of Mr. Roosevelt's election, there was no movement in this country one fraction so dangerous as the destructive forces he has created during his Administrations, nor one fraction so bad as the atrocities he has committed against democracy and against the people of this country.

I write this because Mr. Roosevelt has brought about a great crisis in this country by his destructive acts, and I think it is dangerous to credit him with constructive actions which are not his due.

MABEL RAEF PUTNAM

*Chicago,
Illinois.*

SIR: Particular articles in THE MERCURY I have enjoyed, but on the whole I do not find the magazine stimulating. I dislike two trends that seem to me to appear in its editorial policy. First, its articles and comments on economic, social, and political subjects seem to me smug and superficial — long on wise-cracks and short on statements of fact and principle. Second, there seems to be a

somewhat morbid emphasis upon what are to most people unpleasant aspects of sex. I do not refer to discussions of the morality of sex relations, but to suggestive allusions to and delineation of their more grossly sensual and pathological aspects. Sex is central in life, and indirectly is one of the chief inspirations of art. Its diseased conditions call for the inquiring and sympathetic attitude of the physician and the psychologist, but should remain quite outside the field of art.

It seems to me that these editorial policies will appeal more to the playboy, the third-rate sophisticate who dabbles in the muddy backwaters (only the backwaters) of psychoanalysis, and the pervert than to the ordinary sort of person who wants to enjoy life fully and to bear a fair share of its social responsibilities.

EDWARD P. ST. JOHN

P.S. You have my permission to print this letter, but if I am correct in my estimate of the spirit back of the editorial policies of the magazine, it is the last thing that you would consider doing.

*Floral City,
Florida.*

SIR: I never quite believed that the United States could produce the counterpart in verve and venom of the English *National Review*, but behold, you have done it. Now that the American yokel has been deserted and left to his unhappy fate — too many blood transfusions from Russia made him an easy victim — you feel called to ascend the international stage where your fine hates can command a nobler audience. Pray what will be your next goal? Surely you will never forego your present antagonists — or fail your present friends! Divine Providence will find a way out by proving your dispassionate infallibility on all questions international.

GERTRUDE ANN JACOBSEN

*Minneapolis,
Minnesota.*

IN DEFENSE OF MAE WEST

SIR: I am by no means a sponsor of indecency. I am a church member and am well aware that the Adam and Eve story is from the Sacred Book. Still to those critics who have characterized the Mae West radio skit as "profane, obscene, indecent, vulgar, filthy, sexy, and insulting to the American people", I wish to present the questions: What objectionable thing did Mae West add to the story of Adam and Eve that was not originally there? Did Mae West make it "sexy"? Certainly she didn't create the idea of sex, although she is an interpreter of that most fundamental thing of life, and thousands of American citizens both old and young enjoy her interpretations without being "degraded and insulted".

I am not sure that Mae West's dramatization of the story of Adam and Eve was pure burlesque. She added humor to the tale by addressing the serpent as *Big Boy* and *Low Hips*, and by expressing the woman's reaction to a slow time in the Garden, but as a whole the skit ran true to the original idea. Humor could not have made it "vile and indecent".

A short time after the Adam and Eve skit, Margo, on that same program, played the role of a criminal who shot her lover and was willing to place the blame on some one else. I have heard no adverse criticism of that performance from guardians of the young. Is the original sin worse than such a crime? I am wondering whether we are consistent and unprejudiced, and always thoroughly intelligent in our censorship.

The original sin has kept the world going all these millions of years. It can't be so bad.

IDA K. SMITH

*Hudson,
New York.*



PASSING THE BUCK

SIR: The arguments of Mr. Channing Pollock's "Ten Forgotten Men" in your December issue contain much logic, but in

some spots the reasoning is quite hollow. Most of the case histories fall into a convenient psychological pigeonhole: the forgotten man in nearly every instance is a victim of a defense mechanism. He reasons in this manner. . . . He is in a bad financial fix. For him to blame his condition on his own lack of ability would hurt his pride. He has to have a goat, so the government gets the role. By a long series of rationalizations he makes himself believe that the New Deal picks on him, that *he* is "oppressed and underprivileged". He feels sorry for himself.

"The Workers"—as you call them—often use this same defense. The fifteen-dollar-a-week toiler does not care to reason that his pay is low because his ability is small; he prefers to think that he is being exploited by Economic Royalists. The small businessman won't admit that he is in a financial jam because he hasn't the acumen of a Duke or a Sloan; he prefers to think he is being exploited by Roosevelt.

Mr. Pollock makes much ado over taxes. A good businessman can make money in spite of taxes. He doesn't cry over them. He accepts them as a necessary evil. Possibly the highest taxed industry in the country is that which turns out cigarettes. Every pack carries a revenue stamp costing six cents, and State taxes run from one to three cents. Yet I don't read of the American Tobacco Company or Brown & Williamson going into bankruptcy. Mr. Pollock may say that the cigarette tax is passed on to the consumer, but so is every other tax on every other business establishment. It is cold economic logic to pass the buck to the customer when a new tax is created; this was the practice long before the New Deal was heard of. So the real growl about taxes should come, not from the businessman—a good one, as I have said, can get rich in spite of them—but from Mr. Ordinary Guy, who buys the goods.

JULIUS MIMS

*Tryon,
North Carolina.*

CORRECTION

SIR: In his review of Dr. Roy P. Finney's book *The Story of Motherhood*, in the January issue of THE MERCURY, John W. Thomason, Jr., was guilty of a most glaring anachronism. Relating the work done by a Scottish physician, Sir James Y. Simpson, in the development of anesthesia and its use in obstetrical cases, he reports that Simpson won his baronetcy when Queen Victoria, brought to her seventh accouchement in 1853, summoned the Scotsman and had him administer anesthesia to her. "The story goes," writes Thomason, "that Sir Walter Scott, congratulating Sir James Simpson on his elevation to knighthood, suggested as an appropriate coat of arms 'a wee naked bairn', with the motto, doubtless engrailed, 'Does your mither know ye're out?'"

It's an amusing story but it couldn't have been originated by Sir Walter Scott. In 1853, when Victoria was delivered of her seventh child, Scott had been twenty-one years in his grave. Moreover, Scott could have known nothing about anesthesia since its first use in surgery, according to Thomason, was in 1842 in the United States, nor could he have known a Queen Victoria of England, inasmuch as that little woman did not ascend the throne until 1837, five years after Scott's death.

Clearly, the story must have concerned not only "two other fellows" but some other Queen as well.

CYRIL JOHN CLARKE

*Chicago,
Illinois.*

COL. THOMASON REPLIES

SIR: Mr. Cyril John Clarke gets in his lick somewhat late. I have been informed by no less than twelve persons on the vital statistics of Sir Walter Scott.

I have answered all the letters with proper humility and I passed the more pungent of them along to Dr. Finney, who, I think, ought to know about it himself, for I followed him almost word for word

(p. 185). Dr. Finney also — he sends me copies of his letters to these helpful parties — has fittingly abased himself.

For, Mr. Cyril John Clarke's information, I request that you run a line to this effect:

The deeply humiliated Colonel Thomason is now aware, from sources as numerous as they are authoritative, that Sir Walter Scott departed this life on Sept. 21, 1832. Colonel Thomason is grateful for this correction, and gratified, in his modest way, at the interest shown in his article.

JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

*Newport,
Rhode Island.*



LUTHERANS ARE DIFFERENT

SIR: With Mr. Harold Lord Varney's permission, I would like to clarify a point in his January article: "Radicals in Our Churches". Quoting Mr. Varney, he had this to say concerning the Church League for Industrial Democracy at last September's Episcopal convention: "The incident gave dramatic emphasis to a situation which has long been developing in all the Protestant denominations. Socialism and Communism have penetrated the American church. . . . Covertly but surely they are laboring to transform some of our outstanding church institutions into instruments for social revolution."

As a member of one of the largest Protestant denominations, the Missouri Synod Lutheran church, I'd like to say that he is taking in a little too much territory. At no time has the Lutheran Church been used as an outlet for Socialism, Communism, Fascism, Social Justice, Townsendism, EPIC-ism, Prohibition, New Social Orders; nor is it affiliated with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ. Neither does the Lutheran Church have a McConnell, Ward, Cavert, Fosdick or Coughlin screaming pet political beliefs over the radio while definitely identified with the Lutheran Church. Remember, I am speaking now for the

Lutheran Church of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States.

The Missouri Synod Lutheran Church has no central governing body that dictates even a semblance of political policies. If a Lutheran votes Democratic or Republican, that's his own damn business as far as the church is concerned. If he wants to go Fascist or Communistic, that's still his own damn business. But if he attempts (and none has, to my knowledge) to enlist the name of the church to support his own peculiar political ideas, he is politely reminded of the purpose of the church, which is not disseminating political propaganda.

I think it is time that this is generally known. We Lutherans are sick of being even inadvertently identified with every wind-blown, currently popular Protestant political fad or propaganda. I have read many articles like Mr. Varney's, though not nearly so unbiased or well-written, and always the author fails to point out that the Lutheran Church is not aligned with any other Protestant organization whatsoever. If Mr. Varney wishes to attack the principles of the Lutheran Church, he should feel free to do so, for God knows, we do not feel immune to criticism, nor have we ever considered ourselves above it. But do not attack us through the back door of Protestantism. Call us Lutheran Reactionaries, if you like; call us Hardheaded Religionists, Religionist Snobs, Self-Supporting Religionist Egotists, or just plain South Ends of Horses Going North. But call us Lutherans. We're having a tough enough time answering for our own sins without having to answer for those of others.

ARTHUR HARTMAN

*Los Angeles,
California.*



SILK STOCKINGS

SIR: One of Japan's largest sources of income is her export of silk — and without this income she would find herself seri-

ously hampered in her present divine mission of civilizing China. In order to destroy this income, someone struck on the brilliant idea of suggesting that the millions of women in these United States don lisle stockings instead of the silken ones heretofore adorning their more or less swanky kickers.

There is no official record of anyone being foolhardy enough to make this suggestion to his own wife — or maybe no one survived to tell about it, for there are two items of the anatomy that woman is extremely fussy about having wrapped in silk, and one of them is her legs. Be they short and stocky, long and lanky, or the happy nifty medium, they all alike must have silk around them in order to properly exhibit what there is or hide what there ain't. So it is apparent that the guy who originated the idea of lisle for silk is up against considerable opposition right off the bat. He might splutter all day about the worthiness of self-sacrifice for the sake of a better and happier world, and the baseness of vanity, and the wickedness of setting up false gods in the form of a silken calf to replace the golden one of yore. To no avail will he point out that every pair of sixty-nine-cent stockings can be directly translated in terms of so many slaughtered Chinese women or homeless children. And why *should* lofty nonsense like that stand in the way of milady's ambitions? Why should she run the chance of impairing her sex appeal by degrading her only real stand-by in the battle for males — legs in lisle simply haven't got umph.

Besides, Asia — as everyone knows — is vastly over-populated and it will improve living conditions for the survivors if some of the surplus is thinned out. If one should be sentimental enough to become emotionally upset about a few million Chinese being disposed of, one has but to look back at history to note that these things took place just the same in the pre-silk-stockings eras — so the Japs would get the money anyhow in some other way.

And look what the boycott would do to our home industries engaged in making the stockings and the what-ever-you-name-thems. It would probably cost the nation's other wage-earners up to a dime — or maybe more — a week to support those people just because our yellow fellow humans across the peaceful ocean can't agree on what constitutes civilization and who is going to administer it.

So that makes it plain that whether thick or thin, milady's silken legs might prove extremely likely to kick the whole idea of lisle on board the sweet chariot to Kingdom Come.

ANONYMOUS

New York City.

SIR: The American Students Union, the American League for Peace and Democracy, the Consumers Union, the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, and other assorted and thinly-disguised propaganda units for the Communist Party have recently become quite feverish about the matter of wearing silk stockings, on the grounds that each pound of silk bought from Japan means another bomb to be dropped on the heads of the peaceful, downtrodden, guileless Chinese. As with all Communist movements, this one could not flourish without inane slogans, designed to lure sentimental and unthinking people. The two most popular slogans of the current campaign are as follows:

"Nottin' But Cotton."

"Wear Lisle For a While."

As an American woman who has no interest in the foreign policies of the Soviet Union, and who does not want to see the United States embroiled in a war to make the world safe for collectivist ideologies, I would like to suggest to all members of my sex the following slogan:

"Silk For Our Ilk."

EDNA M. ROSSETER

*Brooklyn,
New York.*

CALLING NAMES

SIR: "Stealing Tammany's Stuff" by Albert Jay Nock in your February issue contains the following remark: "a contest between an Italian and an Irishman, a Wop and a Harp for the Mayoralty of an American city, the Yank metropolis". I am not interested in Mr. LaGuardia, nor in what Mr. Nock thinks of him, but I am interested in his remark of an "Italian and an Irishman, a Wop and a Harp". Must we assume by this article that an Italian or an Irishman should not be allowed to be elected mayor of an American or Yank city?

If this is the case, I suggest that Mr. Nock or THE AMERICAN MERCURY propose an amendment to our Constitution to read as follows:

"That no Italians or Irishmen but *only* Anglo-Saxons be allowed to become mayors of an American city."

Or shall we go one step farther and revive and legalize the Ku Klux Klan? Tolerance, democracy, how many sins are committed in thy names! And some people wonder why and how we have the Mussolinis, the Hitlers and even the Roosevelts!

By the way, you notice that my name is not Mitchell, Lowe, Gaynor or Strong, but the Italians have a name for a person like Mr. Nock.

From an American citizen who, under the above suggested Constitutional Amendment, could not be elected mayor of an American city.

ALEX SALVATORI

*Wheeling,
West Virginia.*



CATHOLIC VS. COMMUNIST

SIR: So Harold Lord Varney jumps to the conclusion that if the Protestant Churches decline to follow the lead of the Roman Catholic Church in its fight against Communism, they lay themselves open to the suspicion of actual Communist pur-

poses? I don't know whether Mr. Varney is a Roman Catholic or a Protestant, but he does not seem to be alive to the fact that there are some historic differences which still exist between them which make it impossible for co-operation in a program which demands intolerance and suppression of Communism, as defined by the Roman Catholic.

The State Socialism of Communism in itself is not disturbing to the Roman Catholic Church, so long as the Church is allowed to keep its holdings. The Roman Catholic Church is not likely to make any strong protest against Co-Operatives. It is State Socialism and Co-Operatives which Mr. Varney seems to fear the Social Gospels are leading us into. The crusade against Communism of the Catholic Church is a crusade to keep its own holdings and its dogma. Who is this Communist that the Roman Catholic Church asks the Protestant Churches to track down? Whoever advocates the overthrow of the Roman Catholic Church: this is the Communist they are after. But how can the Roman Catholic Church be overthrown in the United States? By violence.

We cannot as free Americans, as free Protestants, unite in any crusade sponsored by the Roman Catholic Church without explicit definition of what they are crusading against. The Roman Catholic Church in its crusade against Communism does not and will not confine itself to a crusade against violence. The Protestant Churches of the United States cannot and will not crusade against freedom to think, freedom to speak, and freedom to teach.

But I suspect that Mr. Varney is like many Americans. It seems more important to crusade for a *status quo* than it is to keep our Constitutional heritage alive. For my part, I prefer to stand by the Constitutional heritage.

EGBERT W. A. JENKINSON, *Pastor*
Congregational Church

Methuen,
Massachusetts.

AN OLD CHINESE CUSTOM

SIR: For one, I greatly hope that you have a writer who will be able to give to your readers the true story of the secret wire spy-system, which the Supreme Court recently ordered removed from government buildings in Washington. Up to this time I have read but one rather weak newspaper editorial on the subject and when I think what a blast our "National Hodgepodge", generally known as the New Deal, would let out if such diabolism was not their own child, I smile.

When things must literally fall out of the New Deal's skeleton closet to be noticed at all, I shudder to think of all that must yet be hidden from view. In thinking of the New Deal, I am reminded of a Chinese funeral, where bits of paper are scattered along the way so that the devils, being forced to pick each bit, can not catch up and get to the corpse before it is buried. I see the New Deal as master of the funeral procession, the "Haves" represent the corpse, while there is an immense rabble of confetti tossers, so that the poor devils, representing to my mind what little is left of sanity in this country, never can catch up with the corpse, to prove beyond all doubt that the "Haves" never really died.

G. W. M.

Grand Rapids,
Michigan.



IDEA MILL

SIR: Your publication is essentially one of destructive criticism—as opposed to constructive criticism. The people are gradually awakening, thanks to magazines such as yours, to evil abounding on every side—political dishonesty, propaganda, Communism, etc. What is to be done about it? It is hoped that a few constructive thoughts may not be unwelcome in THE MERCURY.

I. The population of the world consists of a vast number of criminal, insane, mediocre, and unscrupulous people; and comparatively few intelligent, capable, and

honorable citizens. The former undesirable group is prolific—rapidly breeding the future inmates of asylums and penitentiaries. The upper 10% of society propagates more slowly—far too slowly—so that it is on the verge of extinction.

This appalling situation may be remedied by sterilizing the unfit and encouraging the production of the fit. About 2% of the outstanding males and 30% of the normal, healthy females should be set aside for breeding purposes. It is held that any first-rate woman would prefer a 1/5 interest in a first-rate man than entire interest in a fifth-rate man. Those who are capable of bringing into the world the finest types of men and women should be encouraged to do so.

Instead of sending the cream of our manhood to war and killing it off, leaving us nothing to breed from, we should conscript money-lenders, politicians, munition makers, and others leading parasitic lives.

II. The voting population is unable to select intelligent and honorable leaders—largely because newspapers and magazines consider it an eccentricity to tell the truth. The voter follows the advice of the editor, who takes instructions from the owner of the chain, who has been promised a fat political contract.

This condition may be remedied by the pyramidal system of selection—a system of elimination—similar to the method used in selecting a tennis champion. The national leader (apex of the pyramid) holds his position by the grace of the ten immediately below him, who appointed him, and to whom he is responsible. The upper ten are responsible to the upper hundred, who in turn must answer to the upper thousand, and so on down to the basic voters.

III. A man builds a beautiful home, thus adding to the wealth and beauty of the country; he puts money into circulation, gives employment to his fellowman, thus keeping him out of the bread-line and saving the State the expense of supporting him.

As a reward, the homebuilder gets— for doing good—what? He is penalized, fined, taxed!

The present Administration pays farmers for curtailing crop production, for slaughtering pigs and livestock. By creating a near famine they hoped to raise prices—preventing the poor from buying the necessities of life. As a reward, the farmer gets—for doing evil—what? A government bonus!

IV. Money is part of our transportation system. It transports goods from the producer to the consumer. Money enables the shoemaker to buy bread, and the farmer to buy clothing. All of us are consumers and most of us are producers. We wouldn't dream of barricading our highways and railways, yet we sit quietly by while the Wall Street Baruchs tie up the money (or, rather, contract bank credit) thus preventing the exchange of commodities.

Abolish taxes on the necessities of life, tax money—say, 1% per month—force it into circulation, and let Wall Street foot the bill.

WILLIAM H. TAYLOR

*Logan,
Utah.*



NON-RELIGIOUS POETRY

SIR: THE MERCURY has long been our favorite magazine, so we were deeply shocked and pained to find in its pages the poem by Sara Henderson Hay: "In Flood And Dearth". Surely many of your friends, Protestant, Catholic, and devout Jew, will feel as we do and protest strongly.

THE MERCURY, I understand, is chiefly concerned with politics and economics, and I suppose would not publish a very religious poem about (for instance) the Atonement. Why then publish anything distinctly the opposite—the thoughts of a Radical unbeliever?

ELEANOR VAN WINKLE

*La Jolla,
California.*

EDUCATION BOOMERANG

SIR: In the January issue of *THE MERCURY*, President Herman G. James of Ohio University, in an otherwise excellent article, "How to Be a University President," quite gratuitously and erroneously belittles the value of a specific and systematic preparation for the responsibilities of so complicated and important a professional task. He goes out of his way to say regarding one whose ambitions point toward university administration, "... the notion that by taking his graduate degree in the field called 'education', he becomes specially qualified for administrative posts, is not in accordance with the facts. Actually the effect has frequently been the opposite. . . ."

Apparently President James made not the slightest investigation of the "facts" as a basis for this sweeping and damaging contention, for the facts, which are easily available, point in quite the opposite direction. Let us take the State-supported universities of which President James' institution is representative. An article on "How to Be a University President" could scarcely omit this highly important group. What would be the most promising preparation for a man ambitious to be president of such a university? Probably the best way to answer the question is to find the kind of preparation that those who have achieved this distinction have had. The latest directory issued by the United States Office of Education lists forty-five of these universities and gives the names of their presidents. All these presidents except one are included in the latest volume of *Who's Who*, hence we have some data regarding their education. Eighteen of them apparently do not hold graduate doctoral degrees taken "in course", nor does the one not listed. Of the remaining twenty-six, seven took the doctorate in education. The two men who hold what are in effect State chancellorships of all higher institutions are also doctors in education, making a total of nine doctors of education out of twenty-eight executives of State higher

education who hold graduate doctorates. Basing our judgment on the teaching positions that were held by the presidents immediately after receiving their degrees, we find that no other field of graduate study is represented by so many doctors as is education — its closest rival being history and political science (considered together) with five representatives. This distribution, of course, may be merely accidental, but if a causal factor is admitted it clearly suggests that a young man whose ambitions point toward the administration of higher education and who "takes his graduate degree in the field called 'education'" has, other things being equal, nearly double the chances of appointment to the presidency of a State university of one similarly ambitious who elects to work in history and political science, and more than double the chances of one who elects to work in any other subject.

In viewing these comparisons it should be remembered that doctors' degrees in education were not available to graduate students until the turn of the century. Relatively few, indeed, were granted prior to 1915. It should also be remembered that the graduate study of education until recently was centered almost exclusively upon problems of teaching in the lower schools and problems of public-school administration. Organized graduate work dealing with the problems of college and university administration was first offered in 1923, and only a very few of the graduate doctors in the general field of education have specialized in the "higher" area. All this makes the large proportion of university presidencies held by doctors in education even more impressive, particularly in the light of President James' assertion that the average age of presidents at the time of appointment is "just about fifty". (The average age at time of appointment of the nine presidents and chancellors who are doctors in education was forty-seven.)

Much less can we understand President James' statement to the effect that making

education a major field of graduate study actually injures one's chances to succeed in a university presidency. Insofar as the present writer is informed, only three State university presidents whose doctorates were in education have given up their positions. Two of these made a change that clearly involved an administrative promotion — namely, to the presidency of one of the great educational foundations. The third on his own initiative resumed a career of teaching and research after a period of administration regarded by competent judges as the most highly successful in the history of the university of which he was the chief executive.

Graduate work in education is not above reproach, as the present writer, himself a professor of education, has frequently pointed out. But his criticisms of his own field have been based, he trusts, upon dependable facts. A favorite indoor sport of our Brahmins in the university world has been to take pot-shots at the departments of education without even the slight equipment in marksmanship that an hour's study of available facts could easily supply. In addition to this handicap some have been so foolhardy as to use a boomerang as a weapon. It is disappointing to find a university executive of President James' caliber in this group.

WILLIAM C. BAGLEY

*Teachers College,
Columbia University,
New York City.*

AS TO SPORTS WRITERS

SIR: I have been waiting for such an article as Eliot B. Spalding's "Sports Writers Are Always Wrong", in your February issue, for a long time. Little did I think that it would come in such a drastic exposé as Mr. Spalding's. It was high time that someone took those egotistical, self-imagined, so-called sports writers off their golden pedestal, which the foolish American sports followers have given them. Every

true citizen is fond of sports — and sports articles in their daily papers — but to sit down day after day and read the same ballyhoo, is too much.

PAT TOLSON

*Church Point,
Louisiana.*

MODERNITY

SIR: Whither are we drifting when a girl not only has an affair with her married boss and boasts of it, but goes blithely on to say that when and if she herself gets a husband, she will make herself so charming, fill all his needs so completely, he will never think of stepping out on her? Still, if he should, she would go gunning for him. Charming people do that sort of thing, of course?

She speaks scornfully of the wife who failed to hold her husband, apparently overlooking the fact that he did go back to her; she gives public opinion and legal ties the credit for that in this day and age when the divorce courts are overworked and legal ties are easily sundered. Where then does she get the idea that she can be so charming and make pleasing-her-husband her whole lifework?

To be a wife might include such things as sitting up night after night with a sick baby or some other member of her household, and stretching her husband's income to make one dollar do the work of two. In doing this her work might include everything from the family wash to scrubbing or making a suit for Junior out of a cast-off suit of Dad's. I suppose while she is doing all this she can still be thinking up ways to be charming? Maybe, but I doubt it; ten to one if she is the sort who does nothing but take care of herself, she will get a man who would appreciate a wife who is a useful and representative member of society.

A WIFE

*Kinsley,
Kansas.*

FDR DEPARTMENT

SIR: Mr. Nock's delineation of President Roosevelt in the February issue of *THE MERCURY* is a type of critical analysis which should have been the prevailing note from 1932 on through the years. It might have prevented the growth of many of those bizarre myths which always surround the build-up of a mediocre politician into the figure of a great *I Am*. A recent example of this naïve hero-worship of the Presidential office was furnished by Mark Sullivan, who was criticized by a Southern editor for failing to pin responsibility for New Deal phantasms on the one man responsible. Mr. Sullivan replied something like this: After all, Mr. Roosevelt is a most unusual man. He is like no one else and no one else is like him!

Well, except for the fact that Mr. R. is the personification of millions of his fellow Americans, the assertion is substantially correct. Mr. R. is, of course, the typical, horse-and-buggy type of traveling salesman, the jovial, hail-fellow-well-met, all-things-to-all-men, story-swapping (the smuttier the better), go-getting salesman; he loves to travel and to display his wares, the shoddier the merchandise, the more persuasive the sales-talk. Attend any gathering of salesmen and you will see Franklin Roosevelts by the dozen. And, like most salesmen, he is a sap for any nostrum offered by other quacks.

Again, he is the back-slapping, ditty-singing Rotarian; go to any luncheon and you will see him by the score. At American Legion conventions or Shriner blow-outs, you will see him by the hundreds. But first of all, Franklin is the typical politician. He is *unusual* in the sense that he possesses the worst faults of the politician in exaggerated form: the pompous assumption of wisdom, the showy front to cover a profound, fundamental ignorance, the sly, superficial cleverness, the narcissian egotism, the megalomania of one who believes he is fortune's darling, the yearning for popularity at any cost, the contemptible trickery of

his trade, which is comprised of professional rogues, the building of his own personal ambitions to the extent that he stops at nothing to achieve his ends, regardless of his country's welfare . . . a clown, buffoon, mountebank . . . a Harlequin on parade. Not to forget the show-off, the vanity, the boastful braggadoccio of the essentially *little* man. That he is *small* is illustrated by his response to adulation of the type which would humble and dignify a better man. Franklin "laps it up" and begs for more with all the eager fawning of the innate sycophant.

J. E. F.

*Minneapolis,
Minnesota.*

SIR: In his brilliant article, "No Third Term for Roosevelt", Frank R. Kent appears to me to overlook one factor: the possibility of war. He does say there might be a great national crisis, an emergency making it best not to change Presidents. As things are now going we are moving step by step nearer war, almost the same sequence and technique being used as a little more than twenty years ago. The drive toward war has as its purpose, solving for the moment internal troubles of an economic character. The third-term candidacy may be a by-product.

JOHN C. GRANBERY

*Georgetown,
Texas.*

SIR: Of the many appellations bestowed upon the genial Franklin Delano, such as the Arch-Enemy, the Diabolical Doctor, etc., perhaps a sobriquet of my own coinage is not without some merit: the Colossus of Rogues!

JOHN F. SULLIVAN, JR.

*Holyoke,
Massachusetts.*



HIS EXCELLENCY, THE CULL

SIR: In a letter in the January *MERCURY*, Clarence Stone asks: "Why pamper human

culls?" Many others are asking that same question, for under government control this pampering business is actually becoming a national menace. In fact, the trend now is to bring all the better classes of human beings down to the cull, or "under-privileged", level.

The professional Social Uplift idea got its first start in our educational system. Athletics were introduced to attract the culls to higher education — free medical examinations and school nurses see to it that few culls die, at least during school age — free books, school buses, and the like help to make it easy for a lot of culls to go to school in the hope they will no longer be culls when they graduate. Much of this misdirected effort in the schools was bad enough, but when the government took over the Uplift idea, then the lid was off, and the Lord only knows where it will end.

This world is filled with people who only need the first gleam of light to show them the way and they are off like a pack of hungry wolves. And we can see this in our present Social Uplift movement. Unemployed old maids, politicians, labor organizers, and others flock to the idea like flies around a molasses barrel. And will they keep the idea alive and kicking? Well, just watch them.

And speaking of culls, it strikes me that we have one in the White House. Franklin Deficit Roosevelt was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and with a string tied to it so he couldn't lose it. He never attended a public school in his life and never mingled with common folks. That made it easy for him to come out of Harvard smeared over with isms and sophistry, but little knowledge about everyday life.

If giving this man billions to spend as he sees fit isn't pampering an incompetent, I don't know what to call it. These are harsh words but if my diagnosis is wrong, I stand ready to be corrected.

HARRY L. DIXON

Northfield,
Minnesota.

WHITE-COLLAR SOVIETS

SIR: My experience may be typical or it may be unique — I don't know. At any rate, it has made me wonder.

I am an American, born in Maine forty-five years ago, and for more than twenty-five years I have been a part of what is now called "white-collar workers". Through family ill-health, and one thing and another, I have not been able to reach the "capitalist" class. Right now, I am secretary to the head of a social service agency. Curiosity led me to join an office-workers' union and at the first meeting I attended, the enclosed handbill was given to me.

That was a shock — and when a request was made for new members to come forward and take the oath, I listened very carefully. Naturally, my loyalty is to America, where I have lived and worked — and where I have seen many people grow prosperous. It seems hardly a sporting thing to accept all the benefits of this country — and secretly pledge loyalty to another — Soviet Russia. How can I best serve my own land, where I hope to see my son grow up, strong and brave and free?

C. M.

Boston,
Massachusetts.

(Editor's note. — The handbill enclosed in C. M.'s letter reads as follows.)

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MENU

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Kasha, Tchai (tea)
Cake, etc.

UNREAD

SIR: My thanks for printing Channing Pollock's article, "The Workers *vs.* 'The Workers'." I was especially struck by the similarity to the ideas expressed by the late Oswald Spengler in *The Hour of Decision*, especially on page 121 of the American edition, also pp. 145-6, and 159-161. I am not at all sure that Mr. Pollock has read Spengler; if not, the coincidence has considerable significance.

THOMAS B. HOFFMAN

New York City.

MR. POLLOCK REPLIES

Dear Mr. Hoffmann: THE MERCURY has sent me your very kind letter. In reply I would say that I have never read a word of Spengler's in my life, and—strange as that may seem to you—never heard of *The Hour of Decision*. In recent years, I have done less and less reading of this kind, finding that it interfered with rather than stimulated my own personal observations. Under the circumstances, I agree with you that "the coincidence has considerable significance".

CHANNING POLLOCK

Shoreham,
Long Island.



NO HOPE FOR REPUBLICANS

SIR: Would it be proper for a renegade Republican to answer Mr. Varney's, "Autopsy on the Republican Party"? With the exception of the last election, I have voted the straight Republican ticket for forty years. Almost unwillingly I listened to Roosevelt's inaugural address on March 4, 1933, and before he was half-way through I turned to him as the champion of the exploited and dispossessed millions of my countrymen. For twenty-five years I had hoped that my own party would furnish such a champion. With eagerness I had followed the first Roosevelt; but nothing much came of it. I wanted a President who would put people above property, who

would free America from the tyranny of Big Business, and who would plan and work for the welfare of the masses and not for a privileged few. It was with considerable emotion that I changed my registration and wrote *Democrat* where I had always written *Republican*. But do not conclude that I have gone with the Democrats for good. In a letter that I wrote to the President soon afterwards I said, "While I am no longer a Republican, neither am I a Democrat; I am a Rooseveltian."

The Republicans can get me back, and a million like me, when they will outdo the Democrats in the particulars I have mentioned. Why was the Republican Party so decisively defeated in the last election? Poor strategy and poor morals, yes, but much more than that; Big Business had captured and determined the policies and the ideals of the once-dominant party. True, Big Business has dominated the Party since the Civil War, but the country could stand exploitation better in those days. As the Machine Age increased its tempo, and the depressions, inherent in the capitalist system, came one after the other, this exploitation became intolerable. The liberal Republicans deserted in increasing numbers until none were left but the *status quo* diehards of Big Business and their hangers on. If the Republicans had had a generalissimo superior to Mr. Farley, if they had played clean instead of dirty and reprehensible politics, and if they had had Mr. Hoover, the natural leader for a Big Business party, they would have been defeated just the same. The Democratic Party has often gone down in defeat, but always with honor. In the last three elections not only has the Republican Party been defeated but its principles have been thoroughly repudiated.

Unrestricted capitalism is as dead as black slavery. Big Business is on its way out. It has never given a damn which party was in power so long as it could run the country, which it has done almost from Colonial days. It has regularly contributed to both parties. It will stop at nothing to keep itself

in power so long as it could run the country into a Fascist state. The Republican Party's only hope is to free itself from the domination of Big Business. Painting the pump or getting a new pump will not make the water any better. Labor is on the move. It has wrested the club from the hand of Big Business. But neither one should wield the club. This country must be in fact what it has always been in fiction, a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

A RENEGADE REPUBLICAN

Centerville,
Iowa.



DANGERS OF NEW ENGLAND

SIR: I notice with apprehension your removal from New York City to Connecticut. I appreciate and sympathize with the reasons which impelled your migration: it is not the moving that worries me, but the direction of your flight. Instead of coming nearer the circumference of the intellectual wheel, you are being drawn toward the Hub, where for generations our Intellectual Buddhas have barely rotated while contemplating the rounded perfection of their Cosmos. I hope THE MERCURY will not become so intellectually acclimated that it will be drawn into the trade in literary nutmegs.

I notice, too, that Walter Lippmann has made the *Boston Monthly Almanac*. That confirms me in the belief that he is much more of a literary artist than a sound economist, that he is much more skillful at juggling words than in apprehending their true significance off a sheet of paper. After the great contest of 1932, Mr. Lippmann had to be sent to the showers for bungling his plays and not correctly understanding the signs of the times — but that in no way affected his literary style nor impaired his ability to obfuscate simple truths and compound them into complicated data which sound and read like profound analyses of implicate economics. He ought to produce some very artistic masterpieces of astrological tomfoolery for this ancient periodical.

But what is THE MERCURY going to do about H. L. Mencken? The move of your editorial staff into New England is comparatively short as far as distance in land measurement goes, but nevertheless it is distinctly inside the enemy lines, a fact which you will soon learn to your chagrin. Those papa-fearing Unitarians will be horrified at having your publication in their midst. Dr. Mencken will positively terrify the pious defenders of the only true faith. The irreverent remarks that occasionally besprinkle your pages will be stains on the fair escutcheon of the Harvard Bean-eaters and will be looked at with grave resentment. You will be accused of the crime of endangering the future purity of the Correct Way of Thinking. This boy Mencken is truly our Dizzy Dean of rationality. His masterful and learned wind-up make his strike-outs superb. He has lots of stuff on the ball and, like Dean, just loves to get himself into a hole and then work out. What are you going to do with your star player in New England?

You really ought to have migrated out toward the idiot fringe, instead of gravitating toward the dead center — even if a lot of us yokels are simple-minded and, to Dr. Mencken's horriification, do sleep soundly and enjoy existence, bathing at more or less protracted periods, and going to bed in our underwear instead of wasting time changing clothes. Why don't you come out?

HUGH WEIR SMEATON, JR.

Rochester Mills,
Pennsylvania.



A SORRY MESS

SIR: I am moved to write my first letter to a magazine. In reading your MERCURY and other publications of all shades of opinion, I have come to the conclusion that exponents of every political and economic philosophy have one significant quality in common, the venom that marks their writing. Their articles carry the distinct impression that they serve primarily as an outlet for this venomous state of mind, and sec-

ondarily to express honest convictions. Line up all the writers, Mencken for the *status quo*, Mike Gold for the opposition, and all the in-betweens. Through all their writings runs this heavy streak of poison. They have their honest convictions, yes, but first comes their obvious desire to lash at someone personally, to cut, to hurt, to show contempt, and thus satisfy a strange part of their nature. One cannot but believe they take sides in this war of different opinions to gratify a lust to kill—and only incidentally to help a cause.

This leads me to believe the whole world is agonizing in the grip of something that has not been defined by any of our intellectuals on either side of the fence. Nations are at each other's throats like wild animals. So are people. The bloated business man who would like to see the poor ridden down in the street by soldiers, and the sore-headed radical who would like to slit the throat of every person with a dollar more than he has, are brothers in spirit. They exhibit the same venomous nature. (Yes, I've seen both types and my description is accurate.) Such words as Capitalism, Communism, Fascism, have no meaning in connection with this phenomenon. Extremes in all these "isms" are merely symptoms in a basic deadly disease that has not been defined.

Such a state of affairs fills one with foreboding, and I have heard men of solid quality, not given to excess in speech, wonder what the future holds. They have expressed the feeling there are sinister forces unleashed in the world whose primary causes spring not from politics or economics. My opinion, Mr. Editor, is that the world right now is in the same position as Mr. Hyde, that men have given way to the baser elements in their natures until it is impossible to control the brute they have turned loose.

I address this to you for no good reason except I think your magazine is less hysterical than most, and somewhat less biased. And somehow I feel not quite so impotent when I set these words down on paper. I

am a newspaperman of sorts, quite young, but I have been in the business six or seven years, as police reporter much of the time. I don't believe my dilemma of mind can be ascribed correctly to the routine disillusionment everyone meets when he discovers what a harsh and strange world he has been dumped into.

PHIL KERBY

*Pueblo,
Colorado.*



ON BIRTH CONTROL

SIR: Mr. Harrison Reeves has made an excellent point in showing that birth control is an Industry as well as a Cause. He does, however, err in implying that because the Industry prospers the Cause is won. It would have been as logical to say during Prohibition that because bootleggers made millions, Repeal was accomplished.

Bootlegged birth control, Mr. Reeves says, is the rule in all countries. As a matter of fact only in the United States, in Germany, in Italy, and in Japan are there laws prohibiting the spread of contraceptive advice. It is true that the public has treated the laws as though they did not exist; it is not true that less effort than formerly is being expended to correct the evil. Each year for a decade social workers, doctors, sociologists, and philanthropists have gone before Congress and the State legislatures. Their purpose has been to pass bills exempting doctors, hospitals, and clinics from the restrictions of the present laws. Each year the number of their supporters has increased, but their legislation has failed to pass.

Billions for Relief but not one cent for contraception is the motto in public expenditures. For political purposes, Mrs. Roosevelt and Mr. Hopkins presumably rejoice that families on Relief have a forty-five to sixty per cent higher birth rate than independent families of similar social status; that high infant and maternal death rates go hand in hand with high birth rates; that in the United States we lose more than 30,000

mothers a year from abortion and childbirth; that abortion is considered most prevalent in the United States of all countries, because of the obstacles to dissemination of contraceptive advice; and that anthropologists claim we are encouraging the progressive deterioration of mankind by reckless breeding of protected inferiors.

The groups fighting for birth control would, Mr. Reeves says, "outline a sublime policy and proceed legally and properly; they would tolerate no compromise with principle, on the peculiar theory that to do so would bring defeat in practice". They are, however, much more pragmatic than Mr. Reeves admits. The American Birth Control League does not concern itself with legality, but establishes State organizations and clinics wherever possible. The National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control has 100 affiliated clinics, offshoots of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau in New York City, the largest in the world. These organizations maintain staffs and sponsor educational programs; through their efforts 250 clinics now exist in forty-three States.

Bootleg contraception is unsafe, unstandardized, unregulated, and otherwise dangerous. Mr. Reeves has implied that with our national instinct for lawbreaking, we will continue to take the inadequate and easiest way. But a faint hope does exist that informed public opinion may soon force an indifferent Congress to lift birth control from the limbo of indecency to its proper place as society's ounce of prevention.

HELEN HICKAM MARTIN

*Washington,
D. C.*



GENIUS IN THE HOME

SIR: May I speak my piece on this writing game? None but the souls who must listen to the reading and re-reading of every inspired line of drivel the master-mind produces can appreciate a home minus a real live writer. If dear papa or mama or big

sister, whichever it is who has been favored with the gift, reads the life of St. François and dons an ascetic pose, the family is aroused at five in the morning by the clatter of the typewriter. If our artist is afflicted by the grand inspiration for an entire night, the family sleeps fitfully, concentrating on the glory of having an author in the house. When the publishers are aloof, and even the most erudite brochures are returned, the less accomplished members of the family must not only buy cigarettes and foolscap for the unhappy intellectual, but they must rescue him from his dolorous moods.

I am convinced that the writing guild embraces the most difficult, irascible, conceited, and intolerable of the followers of the Muses. Actors, by tradition, are accorded a corner on temperament, but they are often away from home during the crises of creation. Unbooked musicians, while "resting" at home, cause many a helpless relative to rent a cot in a psychopathic ward; and unhung painters bring discord to otherwise happily adjusted families. But the writer outshines his fellow artists in general unpleasantness, for he cannot only destroy furniture and break skulls in his wrath, but can lash at his victims with that most merciless weapon, language.

Lady Nature seems to have neglected to provide an adequate sparring partner for the writer. Even the most caustic editor cannot wholly purge the literary hopeful of his passion for the printed page. Reams of cheap paper continue to be carried to attics; second-hand typewriters are oiled respectfully. Friends may jeer; relatives may sneer; but genius only tosses its head.

I can no longer keep the malice from my smile when someone gushes over a pale-eyed word hog. I can only lift my eyes toward the dome of azure and breathe slowly that I may escape the commission of a murder. And now that I have said it, I feel better.

JANEY MAXWELL

*Stillwater,
Oklahoma.*

A PUZZLED TEACHER

SIR: Your article, "How To Be a Bureaucrat", leaves puzzling questions in my mind that I wish "Mr. Anonymous" would answer. In some future article, will he tell us if we are to believe that all political job-holders are public leeches? If this is true, how can I as a history teacher in the upper elementary grades try to give children a foundation for true Americanism? Shall I teach them that our government officials on the whole are respectable men, and let them grow up and be disillusioned, or shall I teach as he would suggest, that our office-holders are all insincere, dishonest, and unscrupulous men?

MARY BLACKSTOCK

Asheville,
North Carolina.

ANONYMOUS REPLIES

SIR: If Mary Blackstock will read the last paragraph of my article, she will discover that the advice contained therein is directed to the professional reformer as well as to those she regards as public leeches. I gather she prefers the former to the latter. Whichever class the Bureaucrat belongs to, his first task is to keep his job. Otherwise, all is lost, including Reform.

If the suggested means to the end seem contemptible to this North Carolinian bender of twigs, I suggest she examine her own career. Has she never catered to the whims of a principal, or a superintendent of schools, or a member of a school committee, or an influential parent? Has she never made herself appear busy in the eyes of some of the old meanies who have been her superiors? If such tactics have never been hers, I suggest she get someone to translate "How To Be a Bureaucrat" into the terminology of the teaching profession and then put the suggestions of the translation into practice.

ANONYMOUS

Washington,
D. C.

DEFINITIONS: 1938

SIR: I am rewriting the dictionary. The old definitions don't mean anything any more. Herewith I send you a sample of my up-to-date definitions. What do you think of it?

Loyalist (loi'äl-ist), *n.* [F. *loyal*, fr. OF. *loial*, *leial*, fr. L. *legalis*, fr. *lex*, *legis*, law. See Legal: cf. Leal]

1. A title of respect used, esp. recently in Spain, to denote any Anarchist, Syndicalist, Socialist, Nihilist, Marxist, Bolshevik, or Communist who believes in the destruction of all loyalty to law, government, and property; who executes nuns, priests, monks, and all solvent civilians; who receives not a penny from Moscow while his "Rebel" opponents wax fat on "Fascist gold"; and who is filled with a great love for humanity.

2. A supporter of organized government. *Obs.*

CHARLES EMEREST

Chicago,
Illinois.

~

IN BRIEF

The human race cannot survive without idealism — "the striving for the better life" — opines ROGER B. JOHNSON of Mercer, Pennsylvania, and adds that the Radicals whom we sometimes criticize are always in favor of such idealism. . . . "What good is liberty to the man on the breadline?" asks ROYLE B. THORPE of Bellaire, New York. He advises the sacrifice of any liberties which foster industrial abuses. . . . GEORGE A. BRIGGS of Los Angeles believes the four worst faults of the Capitalist system are monopolies, tariffs, public-utility franchises, and lack of sufficient taxes on land. Until we do something about these matters, he says, we are going to keep right on having depressions. . . . This great Socialist State is called "Moronia massed" by JOHN HENRY GUYAN of Newport News, Virginia, in a letter which also dubs H. L. Mencken "an effective vaccine for the present era of

mountebanks and prestidigitators". . . MAUDE C. DUNN of Salina, Kansas, is "surprised" that we would print such a prejudiced article as "The British Fair-Play Myth" in which Mrs. Gerould questioned British fair-play. . . . It is a known fact that both Mussolini and Hitler read every issue of THE MERCURY, says Norman K. Dunwright of Philadelphia, who goes on to hint (none too gently) that both Musso and Adolf regularly bribe us with Fascist gold. . . . LEIGH HANES of Roanoke, Virginia, referring to the author of "Why The South Hates Sherman" as a "rebel-hater", rebukes Mr. Peake for historical inaccuracy in attributing military genius to General Sherman. . . . The same article is called "a conglomeration of opinions by a partial observer" by S. L. HANCOCK, JR., of Rome, Georgia. . . . CLARA A. STEPHENS of Hurley, New Mexico, also disapproves of Mrs. Gerould's criticism of English fair-play. In referring to ex-King Edward, she quotes an Englishman as saying: "We built him up — he let us down", and adds that the young man got what was coming to him. . . . Sex articles have not been featured recently in THE MERCURY, much to the satisfaction of KIRTON VARLEY of San Francisco, who also approves Mr. Varney's article, "The Nation and the New Republic" in our December issue. . . . A seagoing reader, E. L. AYCOCK, who gives his address as Pier 25, North River, New York City, applauds our articles in criticism of Communism, but points out that the Comrades have infiltrated the Merchant Marine only because maritime working conditions have been so bad. Treat the workingman decently, Mr. Aycok advises, and he will not be interested in Radicalism. . . . CAROLYN LINBACH of New York City reports that she got a job with the New Deal in Washington — and is a Republican! She finally lost the job,

but found the work well worth doing while it lasted. . . . There is such a thing as "second sight" in old people, according to DR. EDWARD HILL BALDWIN of Newark, New Jersey. His opinion is seconded by DR. O. H. BERSCH of Chicago. . . . HENRY F. GILG of Pittsburgh sings the praises of H. L. M., ending his letter with the refrain "long live Mencken!". . . . It seems that SAMUEL CARSON in The Open Forum has accused P. G. INGRAM, JR., of being a young man. MR. INGRAM writes in to admit the charge. . . . SAMUEL BUCK, another frequent contributor to The Open Forum, says that if his last letter to us was printed, "I will say you certainly can take it". The letter was printed in last month's issue. . . . R. KARGER of Oakland, California, says THE MERCURY is lousy and that the editor is a Fascist. . . . A correspondent in Tulsa, Oklahoma, who prefers to remain anonymous, declares that our article "Oklahoma's Fuller Life Salesman" was an understatement of political corruption in the Sooner State. . . . "The most anticipated dish from the feast" is what C. CAW of Hillsdale, New Jersey, calls an article by Gordon Carroll. . . . A young lady who unfortunately neglects to sign her name says that she would like to marry the editor of THE MERCURY and would he please meet her in New York one day soon. . . . J. W. PEROUTKY of Merrill, Wisconsin, agrees with Mr. Devoe: "In spite of our centuries of devotion to the creature, the cat still remains, unquestionably, our enemy." . . . Boycotting the Japanese through refusal to buy silk stockings is picayune, says WILLIAM M. BOWER of Washington, D. C. The thing to do is refuse to sell them munitions. . . . "War," announces A. L. PUTNAM of Arcala, California, "is Hell, but there is no word in any language to convey the full horrors of business."

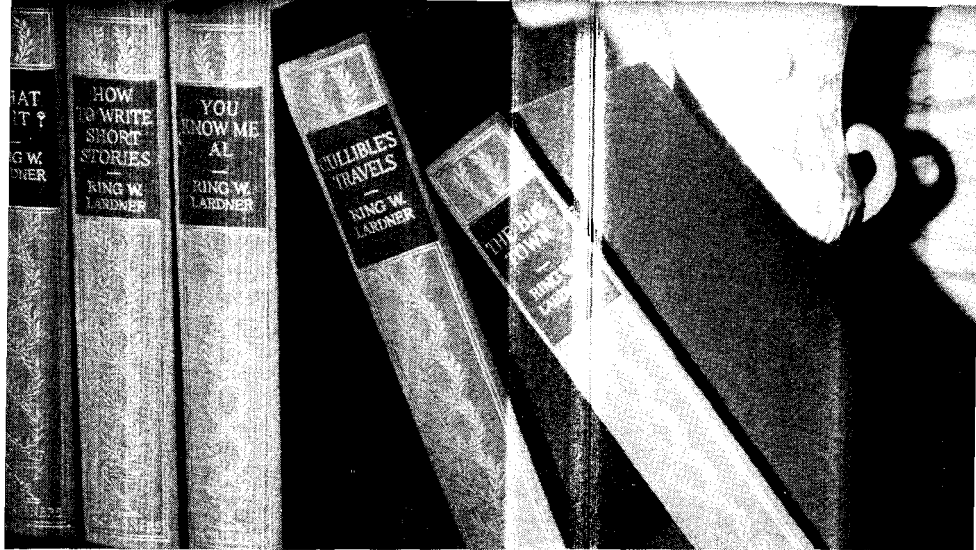


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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front ad't section, p. vi)

MISCELLANEOUS

★★★ **THE CAISSONS ROLL**, by Hanson W. Baldwin. \$2.50. *Knopf*. Mr. Baldwin is the military critic of the *New York Times*. He presents an authoritative survey of the military and naval armaments of the great powers, inclusive of the 1937 estimates. He thinks the Second World War will break in the 1940's. He believes that seapower will again be decisive — as it has always been; that air and mechanized warfare will lead to stalemate; that propaganda will be a major weapon; that the civilian as well as the soldier will pass through the flame; and that the conflict will be settled in the old way, by armed men imposing their will upon other armed men in physical encounter. Like most informed observers, he anticipates no new weapons; only a heightened efficiency in the old.

★★★ **FIRST ACT IN CHINA**, by James M. Bertram. \$3.00. *Viking Press*. Narrative of the Sian Mutiny, wherein the Generalissimo was seized by his generals and placed under a curious restraint. Mr. Bertram arrived upon the scene after it happened, and his account is second-hand; admittedly the Sian incident is one of the pivotal events of recent years, because from it proceeded directly the present union between the Chinese Nationalist Government and the Chinese Government; and after that the undeclared war now raging. As to what actually happened at Sian, no Westerner knows, except perhaps a man named Donald; and Mr. Donald will never tell. The book is capable journalism, although Comrade Bertram writes with a Leftish slant.

★★★ **BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS**, by Winslow L. Webber. \$2.50. *Hale, Cushman & Flint*. A bio-bibliography for book collectors, interesting to any person who loves books, and eminently practical if you collect them, whether you are a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles on the second-hand counter, or a patron of the arts who buys libraries.

(Continued on page xii)



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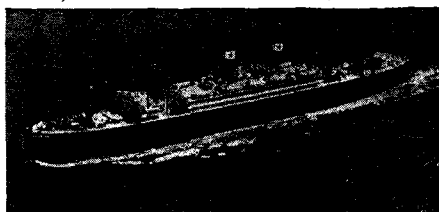
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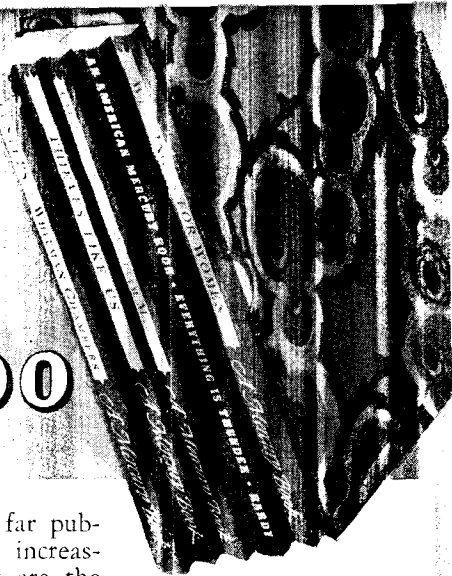
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